FOLLOW US:
thehindu.com
facebook.com/thehindu
twitter.com/the_hindu
instagram.com/the_hindu

THE HINDU

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2022

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
16 pages • ₹6.00

PRINTED AT · CHENNAI · COIMBATORE · BENGALURU · HYDERABAD · MADURAI · NOIDA · VISAKHAPATNAM · THIRUVANANTHAPURAM · KOCHI · VIJAYAWADA · MANGALURU · TIRUCHIRAPALLI · KOLKATA · HUBBALLI · MOHALI · MALAPPURAM · MUMBAI · TIRUPATI · LUCKNOW · CUTTACK · PATNA

Sri Narendra Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA

NAVA KARNATAKA
FOR NAVA BHARATH

Sri Basavaraj S. Bommai
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka

3 May 2022
Happy Basava Jayanthi

Building an equitable and harmonious society as envisioned by Basavanna is our goal.

Construction of Anubhava Mantapa to begin soon.

"Bhagwan Basaveshwara has a special place in our history and culture. His emphasis on social harmony, brotherhood, unity and compassion always inspires us. He brought our society together and gave importance to knowledge."

- Narendra Modi

Garlanding the statue of Shri Basaveshwara on the occasion of Basava Jayanthi by **Shri Amit Shah,** Hon'ble Union Home Minister and Co-operation Minister at Basaveshwara Circle, Bengaluru. Time: 10 AM

"Basavanna is more relevant now than ever before. Vachanas (Sharana Literature) are guiding principles to lead a contented life."

- Basavaraj Bommai

The Karnataka government is committed to building a New Anubhava Mantapa in Basava Kalyana, Bidar, where great saint, poet and social reformer Basavanna had established an **Anubhava Mantapa** (the world's first Parliament) in the 12th Century CE. The construction works will begin this month (May 2022).

Already, the Karnataka Government has sanctioned an amount of **Rs. 500 crore** and released a sum of **Rs. 200 crore** to implement the project. In addition, all historical places in Basava Kalyana, which propagated the idea of equality to the world, will also be developed.

As enshrined in our Constitution, - to safeguard public property and to abjure violence is the fundamental duty of every citizen of India.

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19. NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.
Wear Mask · 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing · Maintain Hand Hygiene

karnataka information
Department of Information and Public Relations

FOLLOW US:
thehindu.com
facebook.com/thehindu
twitter.com/the_hindu
instagram.com/the_hindu

THE HINDU

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2022

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
16 pages • ₹6.00

No victory for anyone in Russia-Ukraine war, says PM in Germany
page 9

DGCA to inspect all SpiceJet fleet after injuries to passengers
page 10

China's economic woes mount amid zero-COVID lockdowns
page 11

Rinku, Rana and spinners help KKR end losing streak
page 13

PRINTED AT · CHENNAI · COIMBATORE · BENGALURU · HYDERABAD · MADURAI · NOIDA · VISAKHAPATNAM · THIRUVANANTHAPURAM · KOCHI · VIJAYAWADA · MANGALURU · TIRUCHIRAPALLI · KOLKATA · HUBBALLI · MOHALI · MALAPPURAM · MUMBAI · TIRUPATI · LUCKNOW · CUTTACK · PATNA

NEARBY

Shah to hold a series of poll strategy meetings

BENGALURU

As Union Home Minister Amit Shah arrived in Bengaluru on Monday night, political activity kicked up in the BJP State unit. The meetings he will chair are expected to chalk out the strategy for the 2023 State Assembly polls.

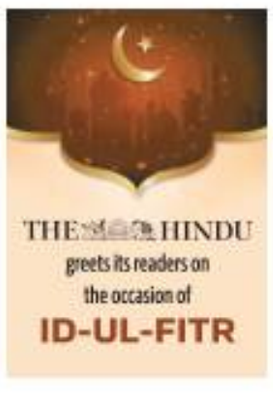
KARNATAKA ▸ PAGE 4

'Not all transgenders using free legal services'

BENGALURU

Only a few transgenders are availing themselves of free legal aid to get benefits available to them in Karnataka or at the national level, said a recent report prepared by the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority. Only 46 took the assistance of legal services authorities between April 2016 and October 2021.

BENGALURU ▸ PAGE 3



No one can be forced to get vaccinated: SC

'Some State-level curbs on unvaccinated disproportionate'

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday upheld the right of an individual against forcible vaccination and the government's COVID-19 vaccination policy to protect communitarian health, but found certain vaccine mandates imposed by the State governments and Union Territory administrations disproportionate as they tend to deny access to basic welfare measures and freedom of movement to unvaccinated individuals.

A Bench led by Justice L. Nageswara Rao said such mandates wilted in the face of "emerging scientific opinion" that the risk of transmission of the infection from unvaccinated individuals was almost on a par with that from those vaccinated.

"With respect to bodily integrity and personal autonomy of an individual in the light of vaccines and other public health measures introduced to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, we are of the opinion that bodily integrity is protected under Article 21 (right to life) of the Constitution and no individual can be forced to be vaccinated," the court said.

The court struck a balance between individual right to bodily integrity and government's concern for public health. A person has the right under Article 21 to refuse treatment, it said.

> Personal autonomy of an individual, which is a recognised facet of the protection guaranteed under Article 21 (right to life) encompasses the right to refuse to undergo any medical treatment in the sphere of individual health
>
> JUSTICE L. NAGESWARA RAO
> Supreme Court

"Personal autonomy of an individual, which is a recognised facet of protection guaranteed under Article 21 encompasses the right to refuse to undergo any medical treatment in the sphere of individual health," Justice Rao observed.

Subject to scrutiny

However, when the issue extended to "communitarian health", the government was indeed "entitled to regulate issues". But its right to regulate by imposing limits to individual rights was open to judicial scrutiny.

The judgment was a result of a challenge by Jacob Puliyel, a former member of National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 8

3,157 cases, positivity rate up at 1.07%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

India's COVID-19 positivity rate went past 1% again after over two months as the country witnessed a single-day rise of 3,157 infections and 26 fatalities, according to Union Health Ministry data on Monday.

Data updated at 8 a.m. showed that the positivity rate stood at 1.07%. It was at 1.11% on February 27. Positivity rate refers to the percentage of tests that returned positive result.

Of the latest 26 fatalities, 21 are from Kerala alone. Odisha saw two deaths, while Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal reported one death each.

Exam scam: Cong. trains guns on Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Ahead of Union Home Minister and BJP's key strategist Amit Shah's visit to the State, the episode of alleged irregularities in the recruitment of police sub-inspectors took a new twist with the Opposition Congress accusing Higher Education Minister C.N. Ashwath Narayan and his brother of being involved in the irregularities and demanding the resignation of both Mr. Ashwath Narayan and Home Minister Araga Jnanendra.

The Congress has also demanded a judicial probe to unearth the truth.

While KPCC president D. K. Shivakumar launched a scathing attack on Mr. Ashwath Narayan without taking his name, senior Congress leader V. S. Ugrappa directly accused him of being involved in the recruitment scam.

Addressing a press conference here on Monday, Mr. Ugrappa said that three candidates who have been selected for PSI posts were from Magadi taluk, the native place of the Minister and also the taluk that comes in Ramanagaram district for which Mr. Ashwath Narayan is incharge.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 4

Manufacturing quickens, input costs rise, shows PMI

'Consumer goods producers report a contraction'

VIKAS DHOOT
NEW DELHI

India's manufacturing sector recorded a slight acceleration in new orders and output in April, indicates the S&P Global India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), which rose to 54.7 last month from 54 in March, even as inflationary pressures intensified. A reading above 50 on the survey-based index indicates an expansion in business activity.

New export orders rebounded in April after a fall in March, but consumer goods producers reported a contraction during the month.

Rising commodity prices pushed up input costs at the fastest pace in five months, while the rate at which producers passed on higher costs to consumers was the sharpest in a year.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 8

Nuts and bolts | A look at the Purchasing Managers' Index for manfacturing between January 2020 and April 2022

Decide on mercy plea of Rajoana, SC tells Centre

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday ordered the Union government to decide on the mercy petition of Balwant Singh Rajoana, sentenced to death for the assassination of Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh, preferably within two months.

A three-judge Bench led by Justice U.U. Lalit asked the Centre to decide the mercy plea without being influenced by the fact that the appeals of the other convicts in the case were still pending.

Rajoana has been in jail for over 25 years. The mercy petition was filed in 2012. The plea for Presidential mercy has been in limbo despite the government having decided over a year ago, in 2019, to spare his life in commemoration of the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev.

The court scheduled the next hearing in July.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 8

North may get respite from heat, says IMD

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

North India can expect temporary respite from the heat, with rain expected in the next three days, the India Meteorological Department said on Monday.

This would lead to a fall in maximum temperatures by 3-4 degrees Celsius over most parts of northwest India and by 2-3 degrees over most parts of central India.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 8

Every drop counts

A caretaker of the Jivdaya Charitable Trust feeding a dehydrated Bulbul fledgling as the intense heat wave continued in Ahmedabad on Monday. • VIJAY SONEJI

Flyers asked to tweak travel plans today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

VIP movements in the city on Tuesday are likely to inconvenience air passengers travelling to and from the airport.

An advisory issued by the North Deputy Commissioner (DCP) on Twitter states that commuters travelling to and from Kempegowda International Airport on Tuesday (May 3) between 11.30 a.m and 1.30 p.m. are advised to reschedule their travel plans as there might be traffic congestion due to dignitaries' movement. Public are requested to kindly cooperate, it adds. The advisory attracted sharp reactions from the public on social media, with some terming this as "VIP culture" and others wondering how they could change their travel plans at such a short notice.

For the first time, KSRTC to operate e-buses on inter-district routes

It will be on popular ones such as Bengaluru-Mysuru, Bengaluru–Madikeri

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Passengers of Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) will be able to hop on to electric buses (e-buses) soon. After the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) introduced e-buses in the city, KSRTC will follow suit and operate them on popular routes such as Bengaluru-Mysuru, Bengaluru-Madikeri, Bengaluru-Chikkamagaluru, and Bengaluru-Davangere. Under the Central scheme, the corporation is operating 50 buses on lease basis and expects the first prototype in two months.

The KSRTC, which had shifted depots from Majestic 10 years ago to facilitate construction of the integrated metro station, will shortly open a depot for operating e-buses. Majestic will have infrastructure that include charging points to run e-buses. Anbu Kumar, Managing Director, KSRTC, said: "After receiving the prototype, we will do the necessary testing. Once we get the green signal, the operator is expected to supply buses in the next two months."

To operate the buses, KSRTC will give ₹55 per km to the operator that includes electricity cost. The operator has to bear the cost - including driver cost and maintenance of the bus. "We had selected routes to make operations financially viable for the corporation. With a single charge, an e-bus will run for a distance of 250 km. Most of the routes identified are within 250km. 'Opportunity charging' will enable buses to run for up to 450 km. We are on the job of providing the required infrastructure to run e-buses," a source said.

The BMTC is running e-buses under the Smart City project, but of the 90 buses, only 50 are operational. as delay in building charging points has affected utilisation of the entire fleet size.

Asked about why Majestic has been chosen to establish a depot for e-buses, the official said: "Majestic is located in the heart of the city. Having charging infrastructure helps us to avoid dead km. At present, buses are coming from other depots to Majestic and traffic is a major challenge. We have got enough land at Majestic to open a depot for the e-buses. Other than Majestic, we will have charging points in the locations where buses are operated that include Mysuru, Shivamogga, Davangere and others." In 2011-12, KSRTC provided over 14 acres of land to the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited to construct an integrated metro station. The KSRTC had shifted several depots in Majestic to Shantinagar and Mysuru Road for metro works. After completion of the construction work in phases, KSRTC received back over seven acres of land.

THE HINDU

Text & Context

FOLLOW US:
thehindu.com
facebook.com/thehindu
twitter.com/the_hindu
instagram.com/the_hindu

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Indian accounts banned

18.05 In lakh, the number of Indian accounts banned by WhatsApp in March on the basis of complaints received from users via the grievances channel and through its own mechanism to prevent and detect violations, according to a monthly report published by the platform. The new IT rules, which came into effect in 2021 require digital platforms (with over 50 lakh users) to publish compliance reports every month, mentioning the details of complaints received and action taken. PTI

Power consumption

13.6 In percentage, the growth in power consumption in India in April. Power consumption grew to 132.98 billion units (BU), showing the impact of the early onset of summers and spurt in economic activities, according to power Ministry data. In 2021, power consumption in April was recorded at 117.08 BU, higher than 84.55 BU in the same month in 2020. The peak power demand met, which is the highest supply in a day, during April this year remained at an all-time high of 207.11 gigawatts (GW). PTI

Increase in coal supply

16 In percentage, the increase in coal supply to the power sector to 49.7 million tonnes (MTs) in April, owing to the high demand for the dry fuel from electricity generating plants, according to Coal India Limited (CIL). The organisation also stressed that it was planning to augment its dispatches further. The statement comes at a time when several parts of the country are grappling with power crisis. Coal India, which accounts for over 80% of domestic coal output, is one of the major suppliers of fossil fuels to the power sector. PTI

Inflation surge

29.8 In percentage, the surge in overall inflation recorded in Sri Lanka in April from 18.7% in March, according to official figures. Sri Lanka is in the grip of an unprecedented economic turmoil since its independence from Britain in 1948. The crisis is caused in part by a lack of foreign currency, which meant that the country cannot afford to pay for imports of staple foods and fuel, leading to acute shortages and very high prices. These have triggered widespread protests in the country. PTI

More flee from Ukraine

5.5 In million, the number of people to have fled Ukraine since the war began on February 24, according to the U.N. Refugee Agency (UNHCR). The statistics were compiled from a variety of sources, mainly data provided by authorities from official border crossing points. Just over three million fled to Poland, while Romania has taken in 8,17,000 and Slovakia nearly 3,72,000, as of April 29. Meanwhile, U.S. President Joe Biden has proposed a $33 billion package to arm Ukraine in its war against Russia. REUTERS

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

EXPLAINER

The debate on the national language

What were the Constituent Assembly debates about Hindi being made the 'national' language? What happened in 1965?

THE GIST

- Under Article 343 of the Constitution, the official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagari script.
- The official language issue was hotly debated in the Constituent Assembly, and the provisions relating to it were formulated only after a compromise that English shall continue to be used for 15 years.
- Jawaharlal Nehru had given an assurance in 1959 that English would remain in official use. However, the Official Languages Act, 1963, did not explicitly incorporate this assurance, causing apprehensions in Tamil Nadu. Violent protests broke out in the State in January 1965. When the Official Language Rules were framed in 1976, it was made clear that the Rules apply to the whole of India, except Tamil Nadu.

K. VENKATARAMANAN

The story so far: Remarks by a Hindi actor to the effect that Hindi is the national language of India sparked a controversy recently over the status of the language under the Constitution. Many were quick to point out that there is no national language for India, and that Hindi is the official language of the Union. The official language issue was hotly debated in the Constituent Assembly, and the provisions relating to it were formulated only after a compromise that English shall continue to be used for 15 years.

What is the status of Hindi?
Under Article 343 of the Constitution, the official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagari script. The international form of Indian numerals will be used for official purposes.

The Constituent Assembly was bitterly divided on the question, with members from States that did not speak Hindi initially opposing the declaration of Hindi as a national language. Proponents of Hindi were insistent that English was the language of enslavement and that it should be eliminated as early as possible. Opponents were against English being done away with, fearing that it may lead to Hindi domination in regions that did not speak the language.

There were demands to make Sanskrit the official language, while some argued in favour of 'Hindustani'. There were differences of opinion over the script too. When opinion veered towards accepting Hindi, proponents of the language wanted the 'Devanagari' script to be adopted both for words and numerals. Some advocated that the Roman script be adopted, as it would facilitate faster learning of Hindi. The predominant opinion was in favour of adopting 'international numerals' (the Arabic form used and understood throughout the world) instead of Hindi numerals.

Ultimately, it was decided that the Constitution will only speak of an 'official language'. And that English would continue to be used for a period of 15 years. The Constitution said that after 15 years, Parliament may by law decide on the use of English and the use of the Devanagari form of numbers for specified purposes.

What is the Eighth Schedule?
The Eighth Schedule contains a list of languages in the country. Initially, there were 14 languages in the schedule, but now there are 22 languages. There is no description of the sort of languages that are included or will be included in the Eighth Schedule. There are only two references to these languages in the text of the Constitution. One is in Article 344(1), which provides for the formation of a Commission by the President, which should have a Chairman and members representing these scheduled languages. The purpose of the Commission is to make recommendations for the progressive use of Hindi for official purposes of the Union and for restricting the use of English.

The second reference, found in Article 351, says it is the Union government's duty to promote the spread of Hindi so that it becomes "a medium of expression for all elements of the composite culture of India" and also to assimilate elements of forms and expressions from Hindustani and languages listed in the Eighth Schedule.

What were the 1965 protests about?
The Official Languages Act, 1963 was passed in anticipation of the expiry of the 15-year period during which the Constitution originally allowed the use of English for official purposes. Its operative section provided for the continuing use of English, notwithstanding the expiry of the 15-year period. This came into force from Jan 26, 1965, a date which marked the completion of 15 years since the Constitution was adopted.

Jawaharlal Nehru had given an assurance in 1959 that English would remain in official use and as the language of communication between the Centre and the States. The Official Languages Act, 1963, did not explicitly incorporate this assurance, causing apprehensions in some States as the January 1965 deadline neared. At that time, Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri reiterated the government's commitment to move towards making Hindi the official language for all purposes.

In Tamil Nadu, then known as Madras, the prospect of the use of Hindi as the medium of examination for recruitment to the Union public services created an apprehension that Hindi would be imposed in such a way that the future employment prospects of those who do not speak Hindi will be bleak. With the Congress government in the State taking the view that the people had nothing to fear about, protests broke out in January 1965. It took a violent turn after more and more student activists joined the protest, and continued even after key Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) leaders were arrested. More than 60 people died in police firing and other incidents as the protests went on for days. The agitation died down later, but by then the Congress at the Centre realised the sensitivity of the language issue among Tamil-speaking people. When the Official Language Rules were framed in 1976, it was made clear that the Rules apply to the whole of India, except Tamil Nadu.

What is the three-language formula?
Since the 1960s, the Centre's education policy documents speak of teaching three languages – Hindi, English and one regional language in Hindi-speaking States, and Hindi, English and the official regional language in other States. In practice, however, only some States teach both their predominant language and Hindi, besides English.

In States where Hindi is the official language, a third language is rarely taught as a compulsory subject. Tamil Nadu has been steadfastly opposing the three-language formula and sticks to teaching Tamil and English. It argues that those who need to know Hindi can learn on their own.

Against imposition: An anti-Hindi agitation by college students in Madras in January 1965. ●HINDU PHOTO ARCHIVES

EXPLAINER

Embroiling Transnistria in the Russia-Ukraine War

Is Transnistria pro-Russia? What are Russia's intentions in involving the region in the ongoing conflict?

UMA PURUSHOTHAMAN

The story so far: As the Russia-Ukraine War completes over two months, Transnistria, the tiny breakaway region of Moldova, risks being dragged into the conflict.

Where is Transnistria?
The de facto state lies between Moldova to its west and Ukraine towards its east. Often described as a "remnant of the Soviet Union", Transnistria declared independence like Moldova did soon after the break-up of the Soviet Union. When Moldovan troops attempted to take over the territory in 1990-1992, Transnistria was able to resist them because of Russian soldiers based in Transnistria. Since then, it has remained free of Moldovan control. However, most countries continue to see Transnistria as part of Moldova.

What is the political make-up of Transnistria?
Transnistria is not recognised as independent even by Russia and its economy is dependent on Russia for subsidies and free gas. Most Transnistrians have dual citizenship of Russia and Transnistria or triple citizenship of Moldova, Transnistria, and Russia. Unlike the rest of Moldova, which speaks Romanian, the majority of people in Transnistria speak Russian and use the cyrillic script like Russians. It has its own government (which is pro-Russian), Parliament, armed force, constitution, flag, anthem, etc. In a referendum held in 2006, over 97% of Transnistrians voted for future integration with Russia and after the annexation of Crimea, the government asked if it could to be absorbed into Russia. Russia, however, was not keen on this. But Transnistria is host to over 1,500 Russian "peacekeepers" and is home to a large Russian ammunition depot at Cobasna.

Why is it in the news now?
Transnistria risks being drawn into the Russia-Ukraine war because of reports of a series of explosions in its territory. First, there was an attack by men using rocket propelled grenades on its security headquarters, followed by an attack on a radio centre which broadcasts Russian news. There were also reports that a village which is host to one of the largest ammunition depots in Europe was hit by shots. No one has taken responsibility for these attacks in which there were no deaths. However, Ukrainian officials termed them as a deliberate provocation by Russia to intervene in Transnistria and Moldova while Russian officials blamed Ukraine for the attacks. After the explosions, Transnistria's President Vadim Krasnoselsky called for a 15-day red alert, with anti-terrorist security measures put in place. Men of fighting age have been banned from leaving its territory. This is being read as a sign that Transnistria will be drawn into the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

There are fears in the West and in Ukraine that Transnistria could be used as a staging ground in the conflict between Russia and Ukraine and that Russia might use Transnistria to cut off the southwestern corner of Ukraine, leading to direct Russian intervention inside Moldova.

These fears were compounded by a Russian General, Rustam Minnekayev, asserting that Russian speaking people in Transnistria and Moldova are being oppressed, reminding observers ominously of Russia justifying its invasion of Ukraine by claiming to be acting on behalf of Russian speakers in the Donbass region oppressed by Ukraine. Added to this was his statement that Moscow intends to take over southern Ukraine, including the port city of Odesa, which would allow it access to Transnistria. This would create a land-bridge for Russia from southern Ukraine all the way to Transnistria.

Clearly, Transnistria's strategic location is important to the next phase of Russia's war on Ukraine. The region is not too distant from the Black Sea port of Odesa and also shares a relatively long border with Ukraine. If Transnistria comes under Russian control, it will enable Russia to create a Russian-controlled corridor along Ukraine's Black Sea coast. If Russia succeeds in linking Odesa with Transnistria, the rest of Ukraine would become completely landlocked and the country would naturally be weakened. Moldova, on its part, fears that Russia will use Transnistria to launch an attack on it as Russia has long wanted Moldova to be in its sphere of influence.

What lies ahead?
There is little Moldova, Europe's poorest country, can do in this situation. It is constitutionally neutral and has a very small military force. It is not a member of NATO. So, there is little chance of NATO coming to its rescue, particularly since NATO cannot give membership to countries which have border disputes with other countries.

Similarly, it is not a member of the European Union though it is pro-Europe. In March this year, Moldova had signed an official request to join the EU. However, this will take time and the country right now cannot comply with the EU's conditions for membership.

Meanwhile, all eyes will be on what Russia intends to do next in Transnistria as part of its war with Ukraine, which has already dragged on longer than expected.

Uma Purushothaman is Assistant Professor (Senior Scale) at the Department of International Relations, Central University of Kerala

Tensions in Transnistria

The small region wedged between Moldova to its west and Ukraine to its east risks being dragged into the ongoing conflict

TRANSNISTRIA FACTFILE

- Split from Moldova in 1991-92 war, amid collapse of the Soviet Union.Becomes a self-declared independent state not recognised internationally
- Referendum in 2006 saw 97.2% vote in favour of joining Russia
- Its a separatist region that permanently hosts estimated 1,500 Russian"peacekeeping" troops
- Population: **4,70,000**
- Area: **4,000 sq km**

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Apr 25-27, 2022: Transnistria officials claim series of incidents:

- Explosions hit state security HQ in Tiraspol. Separatist authorities blame Ukrainian "infiltrators"
- Blasts at Mayak radio centre damage Soviet-era masts used to broadcast Russian news
- Attack on military unit in village of Parcani, just outside Tiraspol
- Shots fired from Ukraine towards Kolbasna village, location of large Russian arms depot

Russia could use flare-up of tensions as pretext for invasion. If Russia reinforces Transnistria, it might then move on to Ukraine's key port city of Odesa

Sources: AFP, BBC

© GRAPHIC NEWS

Shri Narendra Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

KHELO INDIA UNIVERSITY GAMES
BENGALURU, KARNATAKA 2021

Shri Basavaraj S. Bommai
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka

KHELO INDIA UNIVERSITY GAMES 2021
CLOSING CEREMONY

Tuesday, 3rd May 2022, 5:30 PM Onwards
Venue: Sree Kanteerava Indoor Stadium, Bengaluru

Shri Amit Shah
Hon'ble Union Minister of Home Affairs and Cooperation Visited in Karnataka

Shri Anurag Singh Thakur, Hon'ble Union Minister of Y.A.S., I. & B., GOI,
Dr. Narayana Gowda, Hon'ble Minister of Sericulture, Y.E. & S, GoK
Inauguration Program in Athletic Synthetic track

Chief Guest
Shri Amit Shah
Hon'ble Union Minister of Home Affairs and Cooperation, Government of India

August Presence
Shri Basavaraj S. Bommai
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka

Guests of Honour
Shri Pralhad Joshi
Hon'ble Union Minister of Parlimentary Affairs, Coal and Mines, Government of India

Shri Anurag Singh Thakur
Hon'ble Union Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports, Information and Broadcasting, Government of India

Special Invitee

Shri Nisith Pramanik
Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India

Shri Araga Jnanendra
Hon'ble Minister of Home Government of Karntaka

Dr. K. C. Narayana Gowda
Hon'ble Minister of Sericulture, Youth Empowerment and Sports, Government of Karnataka

Dr. Ashwathnarayan C. N.
Hon'ble Minister of Higher Education, IT and BT, Science and Technology and Skill Development, Entrepreneurship and Livelihood, Government of Karnataka

Shri P. C. Mohan
Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Bengaluru Central

Dr. K. Govinda Raj
Hon'ble Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Legislative Council and President, Karnataka Olympic Association

Shri Rizwan Arshad
Hon'ble Member of Legislative Assembly, Shivajinagara Assembly Constituency

Shri K. P. Purushottam
Hon'ble Vice Chairman, Sports Authority of Karnataka

Dr. Chenraj Roychand
Chancellor, JAIN Deemed-to-be University

Special Guest
Shri Kiccha Sudeep
Renowned Filmmaker

All Hon'ble Ministers, MPs, MLAs MLCs and other peoples's representatives are cordially invited

YOGASANA DEMO BY 500 PARTICIPANTS | SOUND, LIGHT & LASER SHOW | RELEASE OF POSTAL COVER AND COFFEE TABLE BOOKS | SHOWCASE OF AZADI KA AMRUT MAHOTSAV THROUGH A DANCE SEQUENCE

ALL ARE CORDIALLY INVITED

Shri P. Ravi Kumar, IAS, Chief Secretary, Govt. of Karnataka
Shri Apurva Chandra, IAS, Secretary, Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports (I/c), Govt. of India
Dr. Shalini Rajneesh, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports, Planning, Programme Monitoring & Statistics Department, GoK
Shri G. Kumar Naik, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary to Government, Department of Higher Education, GoK
Shri Rajender Kumar Kataria, IAS, Principal Secretary, Department of Transport and Horticulture & Special Officer K.I.U.G. - 2021
Shri Sandip Pradhan, IRS, Director General, Sports Authority of India
Shri Alok Kumar, IPS, Additional Director General of Police, Karnataka State Reserve Police, Special Officer K.I.U.G. - 2021
Shri Rohit Bhardwaj, Secretary, Sports Authority of India
Dr. Pankaj Mittal, Secretary General, Association of Indian Universities (A.I.U)
Dr. H. N. Gopala Krishna, IAS, Commissioner, Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports & Director, Govt Flying Training School

IDEAL FOR AGES 11 TO 17

THE HINDU GROUP

THIS NEW ACADEMIC YEAR,

GIVE YOUR CHILDREN THE GIFT OF KNOWLEDGE

WITH

THE HINDU on Sunday IN SCHOOL

AN EXCLUSIVE WEEKENDER FOR CHILDREN

FREE LIMITED EDITION SCHOOL BAG WITH AN ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION AT ₹1299

*Terms & Conditions apply

TRY IT BEFORE YOU BUY IT!

SCAN TO VIEW FLIP BOOK VERSION

RELEASED EVERY SUNDAY

SUBSCRIBE NOW!

Visit www.thehindu.com/thseweekend (or) Call 1800 102 1878

BBMP looks for solution to waterlogging in city

Deployment of water pumps and larger pipes are some of the measures being considered to clear underpasses, flyovers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

After the storm, comes the calm. But in the case of Bengaluru, following every episode of heavy rain are sights of water-logged roads and underpasses, apart from trees and electricity poles coming crashing down. After Sunday's downpour, even a flyover witnessed water logging.

To solve the problem of waterlogging and flooding of underpasses, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) had initially installed water pumps to drain out water and divert it to drains in the downstream.

One underpass in the city that would often get flooded is the Kino underpass. Senior civic officials said that the chronic problem of the Kino underpass had now been solved permanently, after a pipe with a bigger diameter was laid. They admitted that the problem still persisted in the Okalipuram underpass.

Many trees and electricity poles fell due to heavy rain disrupting the power supply in Bengaluru on Sunday • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"The flooding problem at the Okalipuram underpass is because of the incomplete drain network. Once the work on the railway underpass is completed, the drain network will be complete and there will be no flooding in the area," an official said, and added that talks are on between BBMP and the railway officials with regard to completion of the underpass. A motor pump has been installed at the underpass. Waterlogging has also been reported on the Sirsi flyover. Officials attributed this unusual phenomenon to blockage in the drain pipes.

Damage to electricity infrastructure

Meanwhile, the heavy rains caused power disruptions in many areas in Bengaluru Urban and Bengaluru Rural districts. A press release from the Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (BESCOM) said that restoration had been taken up and power supply to many areas had been restored.

Including Ramanagara and Kolar divisions, a total 238 electricity poles fell and were damaged. Nearly 300 trees and trunks fell on poles, disrupting power supply in Bengaluru, Kolar, Kanakapura, Ramanagara, Magadi and Chandapura division. Damages to electricity infrastructure due to heavy rains and gusty wind was reported in Ramanagara, Magadi, Chandapura and Kanakapura divisions.

Restoration work is underway, and 40% of damaged electricity poles were replaced out of 238 damaged electric poles.

Over 850 BESCOM staff are working on a war footing to repair and reinstall the damaged poles and clear the fallen trees and branches. On Sunday night, 228 staff worked tirelessly, while on Monday, 627 staff were on the field, the release added.

All Saints' Church land saved: Citizen groups

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

A congregation of All Saints' Church and citizens groups, such as Environment Support Group and Heritage Beku, termed the decision of the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) to alter the design of the underground station at Vellara Junction as a "win win for all."

The organisations said that democratic engagements helped in saving the church land and green cover on the campus.

At a press conference here on Monday, they elaborated on the efforts to preserve the sacred grove of the over 150 year old church and a special school.

For the construction of an underground station (Rashtriya Military School), the BMRCL had initially acquired 3,551 square metre of land, which was met with strong resistance.

In 2019, the BMRCL made further attempts to acquire additional land to build entry points to the station and other purposes. Protests continued and online campaigns were held demanding the authorities concerned to drop the plan citing that it has an impact on biodiversity and heritage structure.

They had also approached the European Investment Bank (EIB) that is financing the project to save the church land from acquisition and explore other feasible options.

Decision on truck terminal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HASSAN

Minister for Excise K. Gopalaiah has said the Revenue Minister will take a proper decision on allotting revenue land for truck terminal at Kenchattahalli near Hassan on NH 75. Speaking to presspersons in Hassan on Monday, Mr. Gopalaiah, Minister in-charge of the district, said the district administration had imposed prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the CrPC to maintain the status quo at the site.

Three more held in rowdy-sheeter murder case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The city police have cracked a recent murder of a rowdy-sheeter, Santosh, 28, in Nagammanagar, KP Agrahara and arrested three other rowdy-sheeters in connection with the murder. Three others are still at large.

Santosh was a rowdy-sheeter with KP Agrahara Police with over five cases against him. He was involved in a gang war with other rowdies whom he had attacked a few years ago. He was arrested for the same and was out on bail. The trial of the case was ongoing in a city court, where he used to come face to face with members of the rival gang.

On April 28, on the court premises, he suggested to his opponents that they reach a compromise and not press on the case. On April 30, when he was in the new house that was under construction, a gang of six rowdies turned up under the garb of reaching a compromise. However, as arguments grew more heated, they snatched the knife Santosh had and repeatedly stabbed him before fleeing. Three others are still at large, the police said.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. 01 UBL 2022-23
Dated: 26.04.2022

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-tenders for the following works:

Name of Work	Approx. Value
Strengthening of Electrical Supply for S&T gears in Ghat Section (Castle Rock-Kulem section) of Hubballi Division.	Rs. 1,23,34,284/-

Last date for submission of bids: Up to 11:00 hrs. of 27.05.2022

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer
Hubballi

PUB/T2/AW/PRS/SWR/2022-23

S.W.Railways SWRRLY SWRRLY

Search still on to nab acid attacker

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The massive manhunt launched by the city police to nab Nagesh, who attacked a girl with acid on April 28 for having spurned his overtures, has failed to achieve any breakthrough yet.

Unreachable

His mobile phone has been switched off and he seems to be not in touch with any of his acquaintances, said police sources.

Photographs out

Based on some leads that he is a devotee of a goddess in north India, police teams have reached a temple town and have also fanned out to other temple towns across the country, sources said.

Meanwhile, police have printed pamphlets with his photographs and details in five languages and are distributing them in the city and the towns police teams have reached to, with the hope of some breakthrough.

"What we need is an element of luck. We are confident that we will catch him soon," a senior police official said.

A 24-year-old woman sustained serious burns when a man allegedly threw acid on her on April 28 after she rejected his marriage proposal.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public are hereby notified that our clients Mr. JOSEPH GILBERT PINTO S/o Late Paul Pinto and his wife Mrs. PATRICIA GEETHA PINTO W/o Mr. Joseph Gilbert Pinto have lost original Sale Deed dated 17.08.2013, bearing document No. BNS-1-07848-2013-14 stored in CD No. BNSD284, registered at the office Sub Registrar, Banaswadi, Bangalore pertaining to the Immovable Property Site No.51 and 52, Katha No.3547, Carved out of Composite Property No.21/1, BBMP SL No.1686, Situated at Kothanur Village, K.R. Puram Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, Measuring East to West 60 feet, North to South 35 feet, in all measuring 2100 Square Feet, presently coming under the limits of BBMP and bounded on the : East by: Site No.53, West by : Site No. 50, North by: Anjinappa's Property and South by: Road. In this regard a Police Complaint dated 30.04.2022, has been filed/lodged by our client with Karnataka State Police in Lost Report No.0213482. If any person/s finds the said document kindly inform the advocate stated herein. If any person/s misuses the said document, the same is not binding on our clients and they shall do so at their own risk.

C.K.V.K. LAW ASSOCIATES
Mr. VENKATESH CHANDRAN M.A., L.L.B.
Advocates & Legal Consultants
Bangalore-560 043. Contact : 9845846428

PUBLIC NOTICE

My clients are desirous to purchase the converted land measuring 09 guntas in Sy. No. 25/1 of Gidadakonenahalli Village, Yeshawanthapura Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk, which is morefully described in the schedule hereunder and hereinafter referred to as the Schedule Property, from its lawful owner **Sri Lakshminarayanappa** S/o late Venkataramanappa, R/at Gidadakonenahalli Village, Yeshawanthapura Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk.

Notice is hereby given to the General public that, any person/s other than the owners mentioned herein, asserting any right, title, charge, lien, interest or claims of whatsoever in respect of the Schedule Property are hereby called upon to submit to the undersigned, their objections if any, to the proposed transaction in connection with the Schedule Property. The said objection/s must be in writing together with documentary proof of such claim/s, so as to reach the undersigned at the address given below within a period of **07 (Seven) days** from the date of publication of this notice. If no such objection/s are received within the said period of **07 (Seven) days**, it shall be deemed that, none else other than the owner mentioned above has/have any right, title/interest or claim of whatsoever in respect of the Schedule Property and my clients would be at liberty to proceed with the proposed transaction in connection with the Schedule Property.

SCHEDULE

Converted land measuring 09 guntas bearing Sy No.25/1, situated at Gidadakonenahalli Village, Yeshawanthapura Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk and bounded on the **East by:** Land bearing Old Sy No.25/1, now new Sy No.25/8; **West by:** Sites formed in Sy No.25/2; **North by:** Road; **South by:** Land bearing Sy No.27.

K.T. Nanjunda Gowda, Advocate
No.26/2, Sri Krishna Building,
Avenue Road, Bengaluru-560 002.
Date: 02-05-2022

India's No.1 Dealer
VASANTH & CO

Akshaya Tritiya Special Discount Sale!

FREE GOLD COIN*
For purchase above ₹9990

AC MELA
Buying AC is Now Easy
No Initial Payment*

upto ₹5000 Instant Discount* (select brands EMI)
FREE Standard Installation* (select brand)

All BRAND AC's AT LOWEST PRICE

1 Ton 3 Star Inverter AC — LG — EMI ₹1999
1 Ton 3 Star Split AC — VOLTAS — EMI ₹2974
1 Ton 3 Star Split AC — HITACHI — EMI ₹1777
1 Ton 3 Star Split AC — Carrier — EMI ₹2790
1 Ton 4 Star Inverter AC — SAMSUNG — EMI ₹2306
1 Ton 3 Star Split AC — LLOYD — FREE Pedestal Fan — EMI ₹2691
1 Ton 3 Star Split AC — DAIKIN — EMI ₹2799
1.5 Ton 3 Star Inverter AC — Haier — EMI ₹2022

BUY 1 AC — 5 Ltrs Cooker FREE — worth ₹2435
BUY 2 AC — Air Cooler FREE — worth ₹3999
BUY 3 AC — FABER Chimney FREE — worth ₹17490

Home Entertainment & Appliances Offer
SONY 55" (139 cm) UHD Smart TV — EMI ₹5500 — Price ₹ 91390
SAMSUNG 65" (165.1 cm) UHD Smart TV — EMI ₹2990 — Price ₹ 135900
BOSCH Front Loading Washing Machine — EMI ₹3707 — Price ₹ 44490
LG Side by Side Refrigerator — EMI ₹4835 — Price ₹ 111190

NO COST EMI* Debit / Credit Cards + Instant Discount*
HDFC BANK, SBI, ICICI Bank, RBL BANK, HSBC, citi, AXIS BANK, kotak, IndusInd Bank, FEDERAL BANK, Standard Chartered
BAJAJ FINSERV upto ₹3000 CASH BACK* on AC & Refrigerator

Air Coolers & Fans Available
Butterfly 4 Jar Mixie + Pressure Cooker + Tawa — Price ₹9161 — Vasanth Price ₹4990
Preethi ZODIAC 2.0 Mixie — FREE GOLD COIN — Price ₹19344 — Vasanth Price ₹12990
Wet Grinder + Mixie + Glass Top Gas Stove + Pressure Cooker + Induction Stove + Crompton Fan — Price ₹21700 — Vasanth Price ₹9990

Just Pay ₹1 only and Take Home AC* — LED TV / Refrigerator / Washing Machine / Water Purifier / Microwave Oven / Mobile / Dish Washer / Air Purifier / Air Cooler / Home Theatre (select model)
upto 20% Instant Discount* for all major credit / debit card (EMI Trans.) Max. Cash Back ₹20000 (select brands)
HDB FINANCIAL SERVICES upto ₹4000 CASH BACK* on AC & Refrigerator
Attracitve Finance Schemes — BAJAJ FINSERV, HDB FINANCIAL SERVICES, IDFC FIRST Bank, TVS CREDIT, HDFC BANK, kotak, Pine Labs
5% CASHBACK SBI card
*Min. Trxn.: ₹17,500; Max. Cashback: ₹2,000 on EMI Trans. (₹1,500 on non-EMI Trxn.) per card account. Validity: 01 May - 31 May 2022. T&C Apply.

VASANTH & CO Mobile & Laptops SMART PHONE & LAPTOPS @ LOWEST PRICE
VASANTH & CO Furniture WORLD CLASS FURNITURE @ LOWEST PRICE

LG | SAMSUNG | SONY | Panasonic | Haier | HITACHI | DAIKIN | GENERAL | VOLTAS | LLOYD | LIEBHERR | IFB | BOSCH | PHILIPS | TOSHIBA | TCL | Preethi | Butterfly | Bajaj | Crompton | USHA

CALL 93335 93335 Follow us on /Vasanthandco /Vasanthandco_in www.vasanthandco.in

*Conditions apply, Offers till stocks last, Images shown are indicative only.

CLASSIFIEDS MART

TO ADVERTISE:
www.thehinduads.com
Bengaluru: Tel: 9845529981 • 080-22071826
Mangaluru: Tel: 0824-2417575 • 2417580
Hubballi: Tel: 0836-2338600 • 2335700

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SHANTHAMMA, R/a No.53A, 7th Main, Kariisandra, Bangalore - 560070 have changed my name to Shanthamma Veerabhadraiah, vide affidavit dt: 30.04.2022 sworn before Notary Hegde Ganapati Venkatraman, B'lore.

I, MARY.S, W/o S. Gnana Shekar, residing at #232, 7th A Cross, MEC Layout, Peenya 3rd Phase, Bangaluru-560058 have changed the name of my minor daughter's from Flora S Jennifer to Jennifer. S vide affidavit dated 30/04/2022 before Notary K. Venkateshan, Bangalore.

LOST & FOUND

I, MERIN Scaria, D/o K.G.Scaria, No/ 6, 14th Cross, Kanakanagar, R.T.Nagar P.O., Bangalore-560032 have lost my Pass certificate of grade 10th (ICSE) unique ID No: 6979615 and No. 1196772/068 and year of examination 2019. If found kindly contact 9448073692

EDUCATIONAL

WANTED 4 primary and higher 1 english teachers 15k to 20k l&a.cont 9346242030

BUSINESS OFFER

ARE you in need for business loan from 2 to 100 Crores. Ct: 7448738835

IMMEDIATE FINANCE
Loans Against Property, Mortgage Loan, Projects, Business, Hospital, Education Institute established Loans
Cheque basic | Mediators welcome
SR Fin Corp, 9600834646
83, MG Road, Ashok Nagar, Bengaluru.

REAL ESTATE

SPACIOUS 1200 sft East Facing Semi Furnished 1st Floor In Prime Location Closed Carpark Ups A Khata 92 Lakh Direct Settlement No Brokers 9449013957

SITUATION VACANT

GENERAL

Madhabdev University invites Application from Eligible Candidates for 47 Nos. of Assistant Professor Posts. Last date of submission of Application- 31.05.2022. For details Please visit University Website: www.madhabdevuniversity.ac.in .Sd/- Registrar Madhabdev University.

THE HINDU
Text & Context

KEYWORD

Quasi-federalism

Conscious effort on the part of the framers of the Constitution to ensure flexibility and accommodate diversity renders India's federalism an original form

THE GIST

- India consciously adopted a version of federalism that made the Union government and State governments interdependent on each other (with latter more vis-a-vis the former) thereby violating the primal characteristic of a federal constitution i.e., autonomous spheres of authority for Union and State governments.
- There are four main reasons why India adopted a centralised federal structure. First was the partition of India and its concomitant concerns. The second reason was to forge a national civic identity. The third reason concerns the objective of building a welfare state and the final reason was to alleviate inter-regional economic inequality.
- While the aforementioned reasons make a case for a centralised federal set-up, the structure's effectiveness is solely dependent on the intent and objectives a government aims to achieve.

VIGNESH KARTHIK K.R.

The contemporary discourse on federalism in India is moving on a discursive note across multiple dimensions, be it economic, political and cultural, to the extent that one is compelled to regard India to be at an inflection point vis-a-vis Centre-State relations owing to increasing asymmetry. Professor Shawn Rosenberg has argued that without an active and committed citizenry a democracy can devour itself and, in this context, it is worth engaging with India's federal ethos and the associated asymmetries.

Federal, quasi federal or hybrid?

India consciously adopted a version of federalism that made the Union government and State governments interdependent on each other (latter more vis-a-vis the former) thereby violating the primal characteristic of a federal constitution i.e., autonomous spheres of authority for Union and State governments. Similar other constitutional features include the size and composition of the Rajya Sabha akin to that of the Lok Sabha thereby favouring larger States; Article 3 of the Indian Constitution which allows the Union to alter the boundaries of a State without the latter's consent, emergency powers, and concurrent list subjects of the Seventh Schedule wherein the Union possesses more authority than the State barring a few exceptions. India's centralised federal structure was not marked by the process of 'coming together' but was an outcome of 'holding together' and 'putting together'.

Ambedkar called India's federation a Union as it was indestructible which is why the Constitution does not contain words related to federalism. He also said that India's Constitution holds requisite flexibility to be federal and unitary on a need basis. While the Supreme Court of India held that federalism was a part of the basic structure of the Indian Constitution in the *S.R. Bommai vs Union of India* case (1994), the Court also held that the Indian variant of federalism upholds a strong centre in the *Kuldip Nayar vs Union of India* case (2006).

Professor Louise Tillin argues that a conscious effort on the part of the framers of the Constitution to ensure flexibility and accommodate diversity renders India's federalism an original form which is neither conventional nor reductive.

The reasons for a centralised federal structure

It is worth noting that the Indian National Congress (INC) vehemently opposed the discretionary powers of the provincial governors in the run-up to the 1937 elections and advocated in favour of autonomy. However, following the governance experience, in 1939, Nehru argued otherwise. Therefore, contextualising the choice of the framers of the Constitution provides a much needed insight on the past, thereby helping one understand the present and imagine the future of India's federal ethos. Tillin presents at least four reasons that informed India's choice of a centralised federal structure.

First was the partition of India and the concomitant concerns. Anticipating the Muslim League's participation in the Constituent Assembly debates following the Cabinet Mission plan in 1946, the Objectives Resolution introduced by Jawaharlal Nehru in the Assembly were inclined towards a decentralised federal structure wherein States would wield residuary powers. Further, in his presidential address at the 44th session of the INC, J.B. Kripalani too spoke in favour of maximum autonomy to the States and regarded centralisation to be at odds with liberty. However, after the Partition a revised stand was unanimously taken by the Union Powers Committee of the Constituent Assembly, in favour of a strong Union with residuary powers and weaker States, to safeguard the integrity of the nation.

The second reason pivoted around the reconstitution of social relations in a highly hierarchical and discriminatory society towards forging a national civic identity as argued by Professor Katharine Adeney instead of immediate caste and linguistic identities. Dr. Madhav Khosla shows that Nehru and Ambedkar believed that a centralised federal structure would unsettle prevalent trends of social dominance, help fight poverty better and therefore yield liberating outcomes. The third reason concerns the objective of building a welfare state. Drawing from existing literature, Tillin shows that in a decentralised federal setup, redistributive policies could be structurally thwarted by organised (small and dominant) groups. Instead, a centralised federal set-up can prevent such issues and further a universal rights-based system.

The final reason involved the alleviation of inter-regional economic inequality. The cotton mill industry in Bombay, and the jute mill industry in the Bengal region were subject to a 'race to the bottom' or rampant cost cutting practices. The Bengal region saw workers' rights and safety nets being thwarted by Anglo-Scottish mill owners. The Bombay region had an empowered working class – thanks to the trade unionists – thereby affecting the business interests of mill owners owing to race to the bottom practices in the adjacent cotton belt region mills.

Provincial interventions seemed to exacerbate inequalities. India's membership in the International Labour Organization, the Nehru Report (1928), and the Bombay Plan (1944) pushed for a centralised system to foster socio-economic rights and safeguards for the working and entrepreneurial classes.

The present and the future

While the aforementioned reasons make a case for a centralised federal set-up, the structure's effectiveness is solely dependent on the intent and objectives a government aims to achieve. For instance, Tillin observed that linguistic reorganisation would not have been possible if India followed a rigid or conventional federal system. In other words, the current form of federalism in the Indian context is largely a function of the intent of the government of the day and the objectives it seeks to achieve. The majoritarian tendencies prevalent today are subverting the unique and indigenised set-up into an asymmetrical one. Inter alia, delayed disbursal of resources and tax proceeds, bias towards electorally unfavourable States, evasion of accountability, blurring spheres of authority, weakening institutions, proliferation of fissiparous political ideologies all signal towards the diminishing of India's plurality or regionalisation of the nation – a process that is highly antithetical to the forging of a supra-local and secular national identity that preserves and promotes pluralism.

While it would be safe to argue that our federal set-up is a conscious choice, its furthering or undoing, will depend on the collective will of the citizenry and the representatives they vote to power.

Vignesh Karthik K.R. is a doctoral researcher at King's India Institute, King's College London. He tweets @krvtweets.

THE DAILY QUIZ

The United Nations declared May 3 as World Press Freedom Day. Here is a quiz on the press and journalists from across the world.

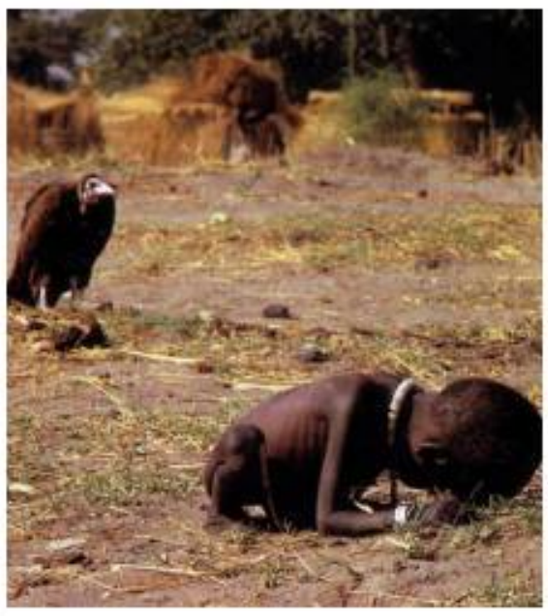
1 The UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize, awarded each year on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, was awarded to which individual in 2021? Where is the person from?

2 This declaration, adopted on May 3, 1991, in Namibia, is considered a benchmark for ensuring press freedom around the world. The ideas exchanged by African journalists and media professionals acted as a catalyst to encourage press freedom, independence and pluralism in Africa and in other parts of the world. What is the declaration called?

3 The right to freedom of opinion and expression which includes the freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media, regardless of frontiers, is one of the rights stated under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Which article of the declaration supports the above stated right?

4 This country ranks 177th in the 2021 World Press Freedom Index published by Reporters without Borders. Article 35 of the constitution of this country provides its citizens with the right to observe press freedom in a free environment, however, Article 51 prohibits such activities citing national interest. Name the country.

5 National Press Day in India is celebrated every year on November 16. Which organisation in India started functioning from this day as a moral watchdog to ensure that press is not fettered by influence or threats?



This picture won the Pulitzer Prize for Feature Photography award in 1994. Which photojournalist took this picture?

Please send in your answers to the **dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in**

Questions (abridged) and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. The original publisher of Jawaharlal Nehru's *The Discovery of India*. **Ans: Signet Press**

2. The film which was Satyajit Ray's inspiration for his first directorial film, *Pather Panchali*. **Ans: *The Bicycle Thieves* directed by Vittorio de Sica**

3. One of the Ray's characters, Jatayu appears in the film *Sonar Kella*. In one of them Jatayu asks the hero about Feluda's waist and chest size to which he replies, "26 inches". In response, Jatayu says, "Are you a pig?" and then guffaws. The "nonsense" verse Jatayu was referring to in his rhetorical question. **Ans: Sukumar Ray, Satyajit Ray's father, whose nonsense verse novella, *HaJaBaRaLa* is referenced by Jatayu in his question**

4. The film by Ray in which he made his debut as a music director. **Ans: *Teen Kanya***

5. The film which is an adaptation of the book *Abataranika* by Narendranath Mitra. **Ans: *Mahanagar***

6. The name of this actor who plays Arjun in *Joi Baba Felunath*. **Ans: Kamu Mukherjee**

Early Birds: Sriraam Kalingarayar| Arnasree Chakraborty| Ronnie Chatterjee

Compiled by: Sindhu Nagaraj

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

"Good morning, sir."

"Good morning."

"Sir, do you write January 15th, 1960 or 15th January, 1960?"

"Well, there are several ways in which the date is written. Let's look at some of them. 15th January, 1960. January 15th, 1960. January 15, 1960. 15 January, 1960. 15/1/1960. All these are acceptable. When you write just the numbers, for example, 12/1/1960, it means 12th January, 1960. In the United States, 12-1-1960 means 1st December, 1960. Americans write the month first, then the date and then the year. In America 2/4/82 is not 2nd April, 1982 but 4th February, 1982. You must be careful. That's why Bernard Shaw said that the United States and Britain are two countries divided by the same language. I will give you another expression which is likely to cause misunderstanding.

An English lady staying in an American hotel said to the Manager:

"Please knock me up at six in the morning".

The Manager was taken aback at this request, for in American English 'to knock up' means 'to make pregnant'. What she meant was that the Manager should wake her up by knocking on the door. I know you want to know what happened to the English woman. I don't know myself. But the main thing is to remember that 'knock up' means one thing to an American and another to an Englishman."

"What's the difference between 'imaginary' and 'imaginative', sir?"

"Imaginary fears are not real fears. These are imagined by the individual concerned. Imaginary enemies are those who exist in one's imagination. 'Imaginary' means that which has no existence except in one's imagination. 'Imaginative' means 'having in a high degree, the faculty of imagination'.

He is an imaginative writer.

An imaginative person is one who has creative powers. Poets, novelists and artists are highly imaginative. An imaginary person doesn't exist; he is in one's imagination. An imaginative person is one who makes use of his imagination to create artistic forms. I hope I have made myself clear."

"Sir, what's the difference between 'aside from' and 'apart from'?"

"There is no difference. Both mean the same. 'Aside from' is American. Aside from this, do you have any other question?"

"No, sir."

"Well, let's call it a day. Goodbye"

"Thank you sir, Goodbye."

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

Timings
BENGALURU

TUESDAY, MAY. 03
RISE 05:58 SET 18:35
RISE 07:37 SET 20:48

WEDNESDAY, MAY. 04
RISE 05:58 SET 18:35
RISE 08:22 SET 21:40

THURSDAY, MAY. 05
RISE 05:58 SET 18:35
RISE 09:12 SET 22:31

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	33	25
Mysuru	35	22
Bengaluru	35	23

Bengaluru Today
35°C The weather will bevery warm and humid. Night will be comfortable. Spell of rain and thundershower to occur.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
34°C A warm and uneasy weather to prevail.Night also will be comfortable. Thunderstorm may occur.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2019
All rights reserved.

THE HINDU
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Directors, Employees of this newspaper/company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

'Only a few transgenders taking benefit of free legal services'

The KSLSA report proves that their access to justice is very minimal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Only a few transgenders are availing themselves of free legal aid to get benefits available to them in Karnataka or at the national level, said a recent report prepared by the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority (KSLSA).

Only 46 transgenders took the assistance of legal services authorities in Karnataka between April 2016 and October 2021, the report stated while pointing out that only 1,664 transgenders availed free legal aid at the national level during the same period.

"It is only seen that they are fighting at their own levels with various departments for gaining access to ration cards, identity cards and voter IDs," stated the report. The statistical data, the report stated, proves that very minimal number of cases are filed by transgender community or their access to justice is very minimal. The report also took note of the scenario that most of the cases are filed against transgender persons as they are seen as "perpetrators of crime."

Only 46 transgenders took legal aid from authorities in Karnataka between April 2016 and October 2021 • FILE PHOTO

By taking note of these aspects, the Gender Justice Committee of the KSLSA, headed by A.N. Venugopala Gowda, a former judge of the High Court of Karnataka, has now come out with a new scheme to help transgender community to access and achieve justice.

The proposed KSLSA (Legal Aid and Services to the Transgender Community) Scheme, 2022 will have the objectives like institutionalising the essential legal services for transgender community, mobilising government machinery to identify and registering all transgender persons.

The scheme also aims to create a list of genuine advocates who have social concern so that they do not take advantage of the situation of the transgender person to further exploit them, the report said.

The report states that the new scheme would offer free legal aid in the courts through the State, district and taluk level legal services authorities and committees to the transgender persons irrespective of their income, if they are seeking redress against discrimination and violence.

As a policy of inclusion, all the legal services institutions are encouraged to appoint the transgender persons as Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs) if they are found suitable, the report pointed out.

Govt. committed to improving health services: Sudhakar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HASSAN

Minister for Health and Family Welfare K. Sudhakar said the State Government intended to strengthen health services in the State on three principles – availability, accessibility and affordability.

He was speaking after laying the foundation stones for the upgradation of hospitals at Shikaripur in Shivamogga district on Monday.

The government had improved health services in the last two years.

As many as 1,750 doctors had been appointed. For the first time, doctors were appointed in the north Karnataka region in large numbers.

Under the leadership of former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa, the department had seen reforms and improvement, the Minister said.

People above 30 years should undergo regular health checks every year. If everyone develops such a habit, he or she could avoid serious health problems, he said.

The Minister laid foundation stones to upgrade the hospital at Shikaripur from 100 beds to 250-bed capacity, the community health centre at Shiralakoppa from 30-bed capacity to 50-bed capacity and the maternity hospital at Shikaripur to accommodate 150 beds, in place of 100.

Five killed in separate accidents

STAFF REPORTER
KALABURAGI

Five persons were killed in separate accidents on the Bidar-Srirangapatna national highway near Tavergera Cross and on Kalaburagi Ring Road on Sunday evening. A 25-year-old motorcyclist and a pillion rider died on the spot when their vehicle collided with a bus near Tavergera Cross on the outskirts of the city. One of the deceased was identified as Saikiran Reddy.

In the other accident, three students died after their motorbike rammed a lorry in the city.

After two years, Akshaya Tritiya adds sheen to jewellery sales

TANIA ANNY
BENGALURU

All that glitters is gold this Akshaya Tritiya. After two pandemic-hit years, jewellery sales have picked up this festival season despite the price rise in other commodities being a dampener.

Jewellery shops reported business picking up after the two-year lull. Many had started attracting buyers with offers and discounts in the run-up to the festival. Buying gold is considered auspicious during Akshaya Tritiya, which falls on Tuesday.

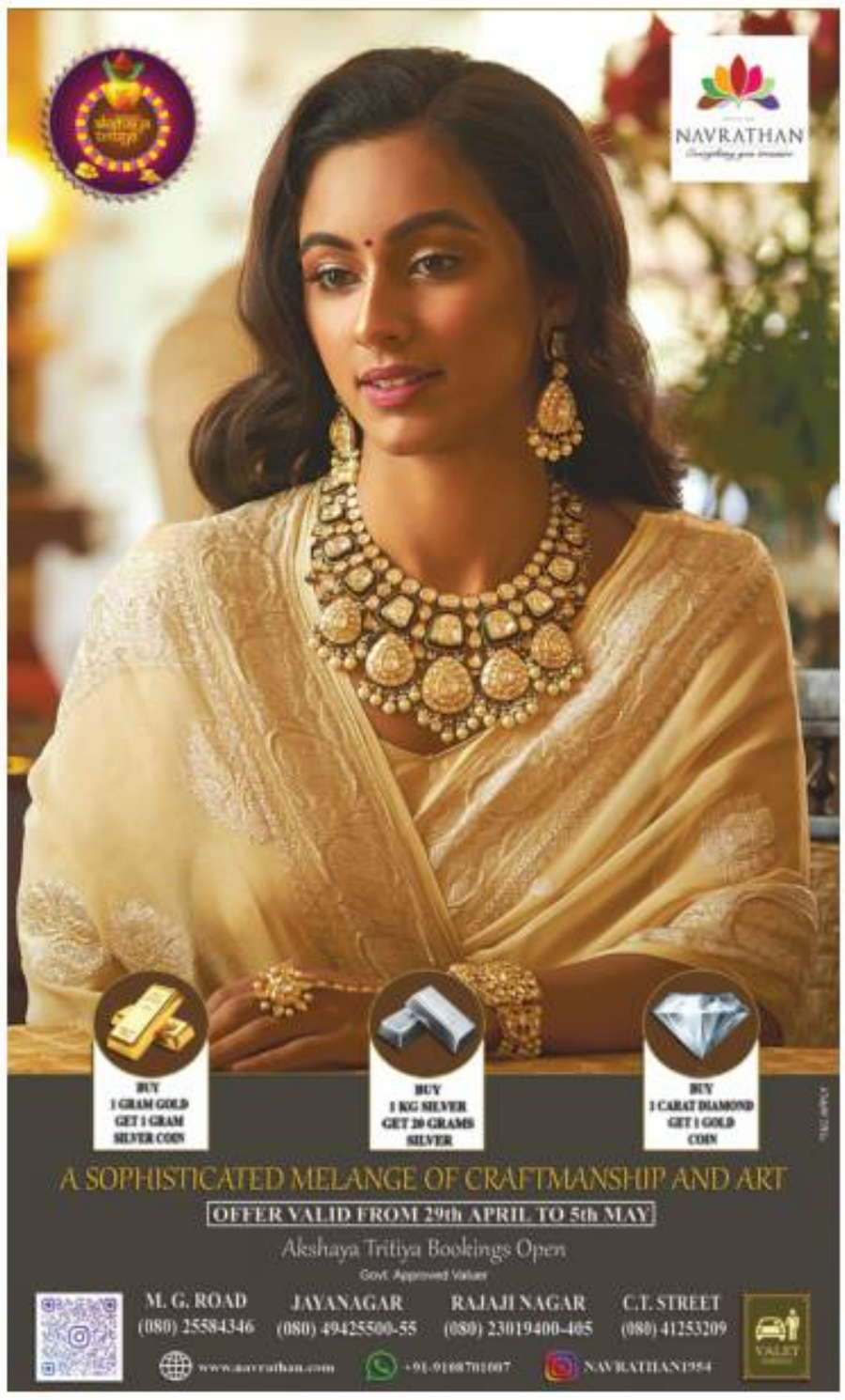
T.A. Sharavana, owner of Shri Sai Gold Palace and president of Karnataka Jewellery Association, said, "The previous two years, our business had gone through losses, but this year we are getting huge response from people – both online and offline. I hope that on Tuesday, the numbers will increase further."

Dinesh Pagariya, Director, Bangalore Jewellers Association, said with the wedding season and Akhsay Tritiya, shop owners were happy with the sales.

"People have already booked their gold accessories online and most of those are going to be delivered by Tuesday. Offline sales are also going good. This year, we are observing more young customers. People are taking more interest in gold jewellery instead of saving money in the bank, as gold prices are also increasing day by day. It can be a good asset for them," he added.

This year gold rates are also stable – around ₹4,750-4,800 average per gram. As many people were not able to buy gold in the last two years, people were not able to celebrate and buy gold, said Pranab M., owner of Preksha jewellery shop, Gandhi Bazaar.

Citizens too had their reasons for making the splurge. Mamta S. a resident of Rajarajeshwari Nagar said, "The last two years, there owing to COVID, we faced lot of financial problems. So, we were not able to buy anything. Even now, everything has become costly. However, we have saved some money and came to buy some gold jewellery as we believe buying gold on this occasion is auspicious."



Festive fervour

People throng markets ahead of Id-ul-Fitr at Shivajinagar in Bengaluru on Monday • K. MURALI KUMAR

MUSIC • DANCE • DRAMA

BOMBAY JAYASHREE concert cancelled on 3rd May at Bangalore Gayana Samaja and instead of that programme, Malladi Brothers Concerts is arranged. G.V. Krishna Prasad, Hon. Secretary, Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira, 9th Main Road, Banashankari 2nd stage, Bangalore- 560070 Tel: 9177609079939

SRI RAMA Lalitha Kala Mandira, BSK II Stage, Bangalore– 560 070 Annual Awards of Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira Will Be Presented on 8-05-2022 at 4.30 P.M. at Bangalore Gayana Samaja Auditorium Sangeetha Vedantha Dhureena and Raga Laya Prabha Award presentation. Dr. Jayanthi Kumaresh will be conferred with the title 'Sangeetha Vedantha Dhureena' instituted in the name of Founder G. Vedantha Iyengar with a cash award of Rs. 1.00 lakh, Silver Medal and a citation. The award will be presented by His Holiness Sri Sri Jeeyar of Yathiraj Mutt, Melkote. Vivek Sadashivam- Vocal, Spoorthi Rao– Vocal, Rahul Vellal- Vocal, Aishwarya Manikamike– Veena, Vishnu Venkatram– violin- Anoor Vinod Sham– Mridanga, Bhagyalakshmi M. Krishna– Morsing, Somashekar Jois– Konnakkol will be conferred with the "Raga Laya Prabha" Award. The award carries a purse of Rs.25,000/- in memory of Vid. G.V. Ranganakamma, Vid. G.V. Neela and Dr. G.V. Vijayalakshmi, Founders SRLK Mandira, Pallavi Sammela Award– Aditi B. Prahalad– Rs.25,000/- cash award, Lakshmipriya Rangarajan– Rs. 15,000/- cash award and Judges special appreciation prize Aishwarya Manikamike and Dhanush Ananthasaman. The Awards will be presented by Vid. Sri Kumaresh. The award function will be followed by music concert by Vid. Bhargavi Venkatram, G.V. Krishna Prasad Hon. Secretary Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira M: 77609-07939

SRI RAMA Lalitha Kala Mandira, BSK II Stage, Bangalore– 560 070, Annual Spring Music Festival From 3-5-2022 to 15-5-2022 at Bangalore Gayana Samaja Auditorium daily at 5.30 P.M. 03-05-2022 Bombay Jayashri Ramnath- H.N. Bhaskar- Patri Satishkumar- Giridhar Udupa 04-05-2022 Sanjay Subrahmaniyan- S. Varadarajan- Neyveli B. Venkatesh- B. Rajashekar 05-05-2022 Ramakrishnan Murthy- Charulatha Ramanujam- Arjun Kumar- Chandrashekara Sharma 06-05-2022 Sreeranjani Santhanagopalan, H.M.Smitha, K.U., Jayachandra Rao, G.S.Ramanujan 07-05-2022 Shashank Subramanyam- Mysore N.Karthik- Parupalli Phalgun 08-05-2022 Bhargavi Venkataram, Vishnu Venkataram, Ancor Vinod Shyam, Bhagyalakshmi M. Krishna 09-05-2022 Kunnukudi Balamurali Krishna, B. Vittala Rangan, Arjun Kumar, G.S. Ramanujan 10-05-2022 Gayathri Venkataraghavan, Mysore V. Srikanth, Tumkur B. Ravishankar, G. Guruprasanna 11-05-2022- M.S.Sheela, H.M. Smitha, Ancor Ananthakrishna Sharma, S.N. Narayanamurthy 12-05-2022 Aishwarya Vidya Raghunath, Charulatha Ramanujam, B.S. Prashanth, B.J. Kiran Kumar, 13-05-2022 Abhishek Raghuram - Mysore N. Karthik, N.C. Bharadwaj, Krishna Sriram, 14-05-2022- Dr. Jayanthi Kumaresh, K.U.Jayachandra Rao, Giridhar Udupa, Pramath Kiran, 15-05-2022 Mysore M. Nagaraj & Mysore M. Manjunath, Bangalore V. Praveen, G. Guruprasanna. All are welcome, G.V. Krishna Prasad. Hon. Secretary, Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira, M: 7760907939.

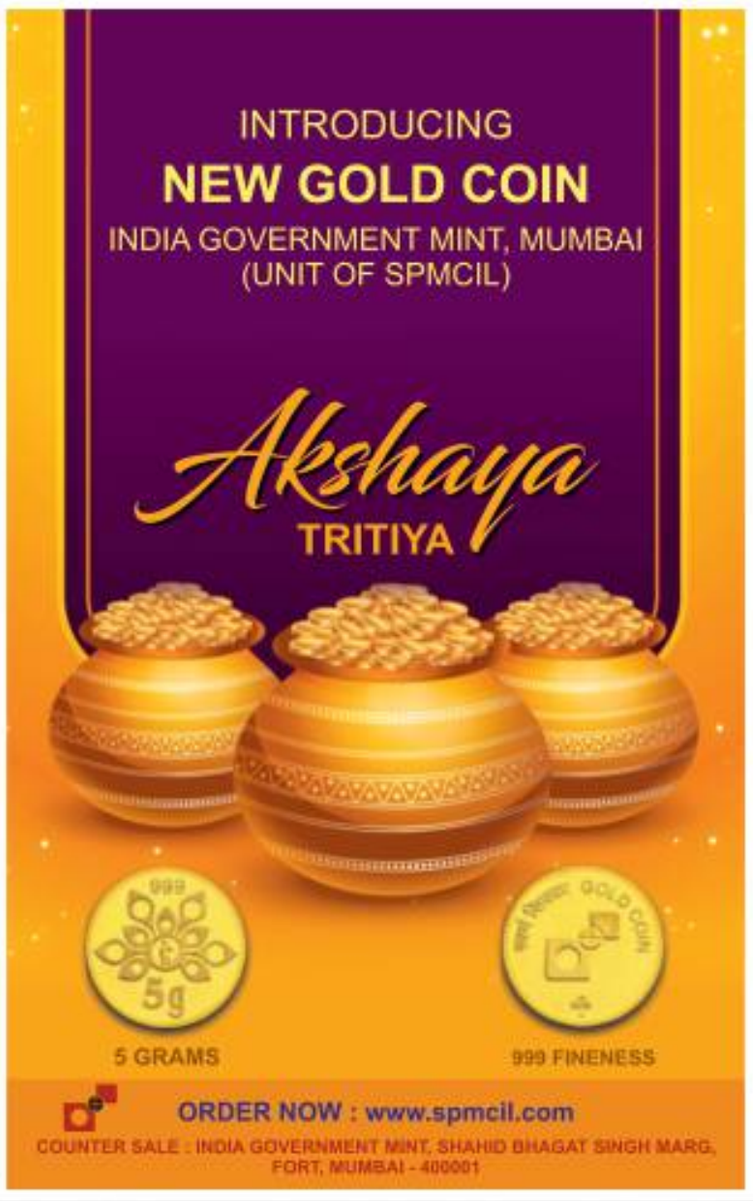
Hotel, convention centre opened

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Hilton, an international hospitality brand, in partnership with Embassy REIT, a real estate investment trust, has announced the opening of a new, 266-keys full-service hotel and Hilton Convention Centre, a Meetings, Incentives, Conference/Conventions and Exhibitions/Events (MICE) infrastructure at Embassy Manyata Business Park, here on Monday.

The Hilton-Embassy combine had opened a 353-key Hilton Garden Inn at Embassy Manyata Business Park in March this year, making the dual-branded hotel complex with a total of 619 rooms.

Navjit Ahluwalia, Senior Vice President and Country Head of Hilton in India, said, "The opening of one of the largest hotel complexes in South India is a key milestone for Hilton." Embassy REIT's partnership with Hilton continues to grow with the opening of this integrated complex," said Michael Holland, CEO, Embassy Office Parks REIT.



IN BRIEF

SI, constables booked

MANGALURU

Udupi police have booked a sub-inspector of police and two constables for abetment to suicide of 42-year-old District Armed Reserve (DAR) Head Constable Rajesh Kunder. Rajesh Kunder was found dead at the SSLC answer sheet evaluation centre in Adi Udupi on April 29 where he had been posted along with two other constables. Based on a complaint by his wife, the police had registered a case of unnatural death.

Published by N. Ravi at Kasturi Buildings, 859 & 860, Anna Salai, Chennai-600002 and Printed by C. Sridhar at Plot No. 13-D, Bommasandra-Jigani Link Road, KIADB Industrial Area, Bommasandra, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560099 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath (Responsible for selection of news under the PRB Act).
RNI No. KAREMG/1970/49945 • ISSN 0971 - 751X • Vol. 53 • No. 104

Recruitment scam: CID probe expands; re-exam opposed

Suspected malpractices unearthed at seven centres in Bengaluru

STAFF RPORTER
BENGALURU

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) probe into the Police Sub-Inspectors (PSI) recruitment scam is expanding. What started as malpractices that came to light in three centres in Afzalpur, Kalaburagi district, has now spread out as suspected malpractices have been unearthed in seven centres in Bengaluru. A total of 20 of the 545 selected candidates have been arrested so far and more named in FIRs.

"Answer sheets of all 545 candidates have been forensically scrutinised and all candidates questioned, based on which over 30 suspected to have indulged in malpractices have been shortlisted and inquiry is on," a senior CID official said. Though the probe is identifying candidates and examination centres that have indulged in malpractices, the probe is yet to uncover the money trail of the bribes candidates paid and the involvement of any senior officials of the police recruitment cell.

The State Government's decision to annul the provisional selection list and order re-exams has met with stiff opposition from the selected candidates, harking back to opposition from the selected candidates when the 2011 batch KPSC Gazetted Probationer Officers' list was similarly cancelled over allegations of corruption.

"The State Government's blanket decision to annul the list has not only hit us hard, but also paints all of us with the same brush. Inquire all the 545 candidates who have been selected including me, and either arrest me if I have indulged in malpractices or give me my appointment order," said one of the candidates, sitting in protest at Freedom Park, who did not wish to be named.

Another candidate, Anil Kumar, pointed out that the ruling BJP Government had recently brought in a law restoring the 2011 KPSC list that Siddaramaiah Government had withdrawn notification for, a decision upheld by both the Karnataka High Court and the Supreme Court. "When they have restored the 2011 KPSC list, how can they now annul the PSI selection list?," he questioned. Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah, who cancelled the KPSC 2011 list, has supported cancellation of the PSI selection list as well, while H.D. Kumaraswamy has opposed cancellation of both selection lists.

Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs J.C. Madhuswamy told *The Hindu* that the 2011 KPSC list and the PSI provisional selection list were not comparable. "The question in the 2011 KPSC list cancellation was whether the Government had the powers to cancel the list by a statutory body like KPSC, without discussing it in the Assembly. The powers of the Assembly were curtailed. So we brought in a law restoring the list. Moreover, there were no FIRs, arrests in the case of KPSC 2011 list, which is not the case with the PSI selection list. PSI selections were done by the State Government and not KPSC," he said.

Minister's kin questioned?

STAFF RPORTER
BENGALURU

Speculations were rife on Monday that the CID has questioned and recorded the statement of the brother of a State Minister in connection with the PSI recruitment scam. However, senior CID officials denied this.

The Congress had alleged the involvement of Satish, brother of Higher Education Minister C.N. Ashwath Narayan, to help candidate Darshan Gowda get selected. Darshan Gowda is one of the candidates suspected to have indulged in malpractices during the CID probe. Dr. Narayan has denied these allegations terming them "baseless".

Gyan Jyoti English Medium school principal surrenders

Arrested BJP leader had claimed he was the mastermind

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KALABURAGI

Kashinath, principal of Gyan Jyoti English Medium School in Kalaburagi, where the malpractices in the examination for the recruitment of Police Sub-Inspectors (PSIs) were reported, surrendered before the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) on Monday.

His surrender came after BJP leader Divya Hagaragi, who ran the institution, had revealed during questioning that he was the mastermind who had played a key role by minutely planning and executing the malpractices.

Manjunath Melakundi, Assistant Engineer in the Irrigation Department who was one of the prime accused, had surrendered before the CID on Sunday.

According to sources in the CID, Mr. Melakundi was constructing a house at Jayanagar in Kalaburagi at a cost of around ₹3 crore. He was planning to visit some foreign countries to purchase materials for the interiors of the house. He abandoned the plan when the scam was exposed and went incommunicado. He had travelled to Bengaluru, Mangaluru, Karwar, and some towns in Andhra Pradesh to evade arrest before surrendering on Monday.

The CID had also taken Sridhar Pawar, the candidate who had exposed the scam by sharing OMR sheets on social media, into custody on Sunday.

Malpratices were reported at Gyan Jyoti School in Kalaburagi, run by BJP leader Divya Hagaragi. • ARUN KULKARNI

Children meet arrested BJP leader

Ms. Hagaragi's children, who were sent to their grandparents' place in Vijayapura district when the scam broke out, met her in the CID office at Aiwan-e-Shahi State Guest House on Monday. Ms. Hagaragi, who was absconding till April 28, was arrested in Pune on April 29 and later brought to Kalaburagi. Ms. Hagaragi broke down on seeing her children.

Local BJP leader Bhagirathi Gunnapur, a close associate of Ms. Hagaragi and president of the BJP's women wing in Kalaburagi district, was denied permission to meet Ms. Hagaragi.

Some BJP leaders, including the party's State unit spokesperson and Sedam MLA Rajkumar Patil Telkur, had claimed that Ms. Hagaragi was not a BJP leader soon after her name surfaced in the scam.

No question of ceding even an inch of our land: Bommai

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Monday said Karnataka was planning how it could claim Kannada-speaking villages in neighbouring Maharashtra and condemned leaders of the Maha Vikas Aghadi Government for frequently raking up the language-border row. "The Government's stand is very clear on the border issue. There is no question of ceding even an inch of our land," Mr. Bommai said.

He was responding to Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar's statement that Maharashtra would continue to extend support to the fight of Marathi-speaking people residing in areas bordering Karnataka to become a part of Maharashtra.

"There are Kannada-speaking areas in Maharashtra and we are also thinking of how to get them," Mr. Bommai said, lashing out at Mr. Pawar for raising the "language bogey" as a tactic to divert the attention away from the political crisis in his State.

FROM PAGE ONE

Exam scam: Cong. trains guns on Ashwath Narayan

He alleged that the Minister's brother, Satish, had allegedly received a bribe of ₹80 lakh from a candidate, Darshan V. Gowda, who was selected for the job. Why is Mr. Ashwath Narayan, who speaks about manhood silent about the scam? the Congress leader asked, in an obvious reference to the Minister's earlier spat with Congress leaders in which he had referred to manhood. He remarked that "the needle of suspicion is pointing towards Mr. Ashwath Narayan and his brother Satish".

Earlier, Mr. Shivakumar alleged that "it's not only the Minister's brother, but the Minister himself is involved in the recruitment scam". Three selected candidates sold their properties to pay bribes and the whole village knew about it. With the influence of some people, a candidate had been freed from the police interrogation, he alleged. He urged the Chief Minister to act against those involved in the scam irrespective of their political affiliations.

Mr. Ugrappa also accused Mr. Ashwath Narayan of having a role in the irregularities in the recruitment of assistant professors in government colleges.

On his part, Mr. Ashwath Narayan termed the accusations levelled against him by Congress leaders as baseless and said he would take legal action for making allegations against him without evidence.

"The Congress leaders have intentionally plotted this at the time when Union Home Minister is arriving in the city", he charged.

"I have not recommended any candidate to be appointed. Those who are making allegations are indulging in issuing vague statements," he said. Being intolerant of my pro-developmental approach, Mr. Shivakumar was engaged in fabricating stories. But the truth would be revealed if they were examined and any one was free to verify them, he challenged.

"There is no question of misuse of office either by me or my family members. However, some have lost human sensitivity after entering politics. But, It will be impossible to blemish my image," Mr. Ashwath Narayan remarked.

"It is true that I have an elder brother by name Satish. But, he has not done anything wrong. Our family always stood against corruption and will remain so in the future also. Being intolerant of my transparent attitude opponents are making vain attempts to tarnish my image," he said.

If the accusations now made by Mr. Ugrappa were to be treated as true, then, the statement he made a few days ago, calling his own party president Mr. Shivakumar an utter corrupt should also be accepted as true, Mr. Ashwath Narayan lambasted.

It may be noted that following malpractices in the PSI recruitment examination in various centres, the State Government annulled the selection list of candidates and ordered re-examination, besides deciding to go in for a CID probe.

'Officials told to ensure direct transfer of grant to beneficiaries'

CM launches 'Kalyana Mitra' helpline

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Monday said officials have been instructed to ensure direct transfer of grants under various welfare schemes for beneficiaries belonging to backward classes, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes.

Speaking after launching the 'Kalyana Mitra' helpline for citizens and a professional capacity building workshop for officials of the Social Welfare Department here, Mr. Bommai said he would personally monitor direct transfer of grants under welfare schemes to beneficiaries and the judicious use of tax-payers money.

"The era of change has started, the days of alibis are over. The Government is doing so much for education and improving the income of weaker sections", Mr. Bommai said. Mere slogans are not enough, funds allocated for the welfare of weaker sections should reach them without any hitch, he said.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, Minister for Social Welfare Kota Srinivas Poojary, and Legislative Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti at the launch of the helpline in Bengaluru on Monday. • SUDHAKARA JAIN

Noting that the labour of farmers and labourers spur economic growth, the Chief Minister said the State Government has drawn up many programmes for the welfare of backward classes, SC, and ST communities. A five-year programme would be formulated for the development of SC, ST communities. Anchor Bank was being created for the purpose. A grant of ₹28,000 crore has been earmarked for SC and ST communities, he said. Mr. Bommai said self-employment schemes, ₹20 lakh grant for purchase of land, and ₹2 lakh grant for housing were being implemented. The Chief Minister told the officials to pull their socks up and resolve to serve weaker sections with sincerity.

"He told officials to look at problems from the perspective of the poor who approach them to avail benefits. "We will make changes in administration and reduce layers in the decision-making system. The Social Welfare Department would be overhauled," he said.

Amit Shah to hold a series of election strategy meetings

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

As Union Home Minister Amit Shah arrived in Bengaluru on Monday night, political activity kicked up in the BJP State unit. The series of meetings he will chair with party leaders on Tuesday are expected to chalk out the strategy for the 2023 State Assembly polls.

Mr. Shah will participate in a lunch hosted by Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, which will see all MLAs, MLCs, and MPs from the party participate. He will later address a special meeting of party office-bearers and senior leaders at a star hotel in the city, where he is expected to discuss the strategy roadmap for the elections.

He is also expected to chair the core-committee meeting. B. L. Santosh, BJP national general secretary (Organisation), had on Sunday hinted that the party may go for fresh faces, denying tickets to several incumbent legislators, a strategy that has worked for the party in other States. These issues are expected to come up for discussion on Tuesday.

Amit Shah

This is the second visit of Mr. Shah to the State in a month's time, indicating the party high command will drive the campaign in Karnataka.

Amidst speculations of leadership change, many in the party have denied them as mere "rumours". Former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa, speaking to media persons on Monday, said Mr. Bommai was doing good work and there was no question of leadership change. Speculations were rife after Mr. Santosh's statement on Sunday that the BJP was opposed to dynastic politics and said leadership change was one of its strengths and he cited examples of Uttarakhand and Gujarat.

Meanwhile, intense lobbying is on to secure a berth in the Cabinet. Mr. Bommai had recently said he will discuss Cabinet expansion when Mr. Shah visits the State. "Mostly four to five Ministers will be dropped and nearly 10 new faces will be inducted into the Cabinet by May 15. The list will mostly be finalised on Tuesday," a senior leader said.

Act tough against RSS, Bajrang Dal: Vishwanath

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MYSURU

Former Minister and BJP MLC A.H. Vishwanath on Monday asked Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai to act tough against RSS, Bajrang Dal, and Sri Ram Sena for creating confusion in society. Responding to Mr. Bommai's reported statement about his "soft administration", Mr. Vishwanath said there is no such thing as "soft" and "hard" administration.

Mr. Bommai should exercise his powers under the Constitution. He should act tough against RSS, Bajrang Dal and Sri Ram Sena that are creating confusion in society.

HC directs public sector bank to refund auction deposit with hefty interest

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka has directed a public sector bank to pay a hefty interest to a person for arbitrarily forfeiting ₹24.1 lakh deposited by him in 2010 to purchase a mortgaged property, which was put to auction by the bank without disclosing proper status of the property.

The erstwhile State Bank of Mysore, now merged with the State Bank of India, has been directed to refund ₹24.1 lakh rupees with an interest of 8% per annum from November 15, 2010, till the refund of the deposited amount. The interest would be almost equal to the amount deposited.

Justice P. Krishna Bhat passed the order while allowing a petition filed by one P. Balaji Babu, a resident of Bengaluru.

Issued notification

The bank had issued notification on October 15, 2010, to auction a property as its owner had failed to repay the loan secured by mortgaging that property.

The petitioner, on being the successful bidder in the auction, had deposited ₹24.1 lakh as first part of offer price. However, the petitioner refused to deposit remaining portion of the bid amount after he came to know from the documents of sub-registrar's office that property put on auction was not in the borrower's name and the bank had not disclosed this in the auction document though knowing this aspect.

Meanwhile, the bank had settled the dispute with the borrower through a one time settlement scheme as a third party had paid the outstanding loan amount on behalf of the borrower. However, the bank forfeited his deposit on the ground that he had failed to pay the price offered as per the bid claiming that the bank had suffered loss for his failure to pay the remaining amount. Observing that bank was at fault in retaining deposit, the court said that no loss was caused to the bank from petitioner's action.

IN THE COURT OF THE ADDITIONAL CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE AT MAYO HALL , BANGALORE
CCCH-74
EX NO. 25038 of 2015

BETWEEN:
SHAJI C LUKE Son of C.I. Lukos, Aged about 55 years, Kunnuvila House, Karkam Post, Koattatakari, Kollam, Kerela and Presently at Bangalore City.
...DECREE HOLDER

AND
Shri.K.M.Naganna, Son of late Mayanna Gowda Major, No.209, 9th Main, 4th Block Nandini Layout, Bangalore-560096.
Shri. Mohammed Shabeer Son of Hazaraph Sabh, Major, No. FA 341, Old Township HAL Quarters Bangalore-560037. .....JUDGMENT DEBTORS

COURT NOTICE

Service of Notice by Paper Publication under Order 5 Rule 20 of CPC

WHEREAS THE DECREE HOLDER has instituted the above Execution Petition, You are hereby summoned to appear before this Hon'ble Court on **15th day of June 2022 at 11AM**, in person or through a pleader before the Additional City Civil Judge, Bengaluru City at Mayo Hall CCH-74 failing which the suit will be disposed of Ex-parte.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of Property measuring **East to West :60 feet, North to South 90.75 feet totally about 5445 Sqaure feet** consisting of RCC roofed house within the said property measuring about 600 Square feet and bearing No. 136/73, Ward No. 21, Kundalahalli, Bengaluru-560037 which is surrounded on all sides by compound wall.
The Property is bounded by
East by : Shri Someshwara Temple Land
West by : Nanjamma's Property
North by : Road
South by: Govidappa's Land

Given under my hand seal of the Court on 27.04.2022.

By Order of the Court
Asst. Registrar
City Civil Court MayoHall, Bengaluru
ADVOCATE FOR DECREE HOLDER
SREEVATSA ASSOCIATES
50, II Stage Indiranagar, Bengaluru-560038.

CENTRAL ORGANISATION FOR RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION
1, Nawab Yusuf Road, Civil Lines, Prayagraj-211001
Website: www.core.indianrailways.gov.in
Fax No. 0532-2407797

Corrigendum of Tender Notice

E-Tender Notice No. : 02225001 Dated: 02.05.2022
Following correction has been made in the Tender Notice No. 02225001 dated 23.04.2022.

E-Tender No.	Item Description	
	From	Read as
02225001	Existing	Supply of Control and Relay Panel for Feeder Buy of RTM(Excl)-LMNR (Excl & RTM (Excl) toNMH section of RTM Division of WR, as per RDSO Spec. no. TI / SPC / PSI / PROTCT / 6071 or latest.
Tender Due Date	19.05.2022	31.05.2022

PR-187-2022 PCMM/CORE/Prayagraj
For & On behalf of the President of India
PANIM **"Serving Customers with a Smile"**

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to notify the General Public that my client has agreed to purchase the **SCHEDULE PROPERTY** from its owner **Smt. K. MUNIYAMMA (MUNEMMA) w/o K. NARASIMHA REDDY**, 73 years, resident of Thiruveedi Kuppam, Gangadhara Nellore, Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh- 517 125.

It is hereby called upon the General Public that if any person/ Institution is having any kind of claims, rights, charges over SCHEDULE PROPERTY **OR** any valid objections to the proposed sale transaction, the same be lodged along with supporting documents with the undersigned within **10 (Ten) days** from the date of this publication failing wherein it will be presumed that there are no claims, objections etc., over SCHEDULE PROPERTY OR for its sale and thereafter my client shall complete the sale transaction. The claims, objections, if any, received after **10 days** shall not be binding on my client.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that part and parcel of House Building constructed on **BDA Site No. 90**, BBMP Khatha No. 54 also referred as No. 90/54, Old P. I. D. No. 4-148-54, in BBMP Old Ward No. 4 (Mathikere), New Ward No. 45 (Malleshwaram), situated at **Chandrodaya School Road, Gokula 1st Stage, 4th Phase, Bangalore**, comprising a House Building consisting of Ground and First floors - having total built up area of 1500 Square Feet, upon the Site measuring East to West 35 Feet, North to South 50 Feet, totally measuring **1,750 Square Feet** and bounded on:

East by :: Property No. 89,
West by :: Property No. 91,
North by :: Road.
South by :: Property No. 111.

Bangalore, Sd/-
Date : 02-05-2022
SANTOSH KUMAR. H. DESHPANDE.
Advocate, SHRI LAW CHAMBERS,
AST Complex, 19th Main, 1st N Block,
Rajajinagar, Bangalore- 560010.Ph : 98440 05045

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
(PROJECT ORGANISATION)
E-TENDER NOTICE No. SG/PROJ/PTJ/TCAS-SURVEY/PGT-TVC/2022/EOT(02) Dated: 27.04.2022

For and on behalf of the President of India the Deputy Chief Signal and Telecommunication Engineer, Project, Podanur, Southern Railway Coimbatore - 641023, invites E-TENDER from the tenderers for the following work.

Name of the work : **Site Reconnaissance - Survey of Radio Signal Strength Indicator (RSSI) In Connection with Kavach works in Palakkad and Trivandrum Division of Southern Railway**; Approximate cost of the work: ₹ **2,74,10,555.99**; Earnest Money to be deposited: ₹ **2,87,100/-**; Completion period of the Work: **3 Months**; Date & Time for closing of tender: **15:00 hrs. of 19.05.2022**; Website particulars from where tender documents can be downloaded: **www.ireps.gov.in**

Note: For more details, terms and conditions, the tenderers is advised to refer tender document.

Deputy Chief Signal and Telecommunication Engineer, Project, Podanur

Follow us on : twitter.com/GMSRailway

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

IN MEMORIAM

IN MEMORY

NIDEESH.V.B
BBA, LLB (Hon's)
(School of Law,
Christ University, Bangalore)

You continue to live on
In our hearts forever,
your memories will always
be cherished
Parents, Sisters, & Friends.

Actor resigns from AMMA committee

STAFF REPORTER
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Actor Maala Parvathi has resigned from the Internal Complaints Committee, which was constituted recently in the Association of Malayalam Cinema Artistes (AMMA), in protest against the association's reluctance to take disciplinary action against Malayalam film producer and actor Vijay Babu, against whom rape allegations were levelled by a young actor.

The AMMA, which was rumoured to be considering the ouster of Mr. Babu from the executive committee, desisted from such a step. The association's executive committee which met on Sunday waited till around 8.15 p.m. to get a letter from the producer, expressing his willingness to "temporarily stay away" from the committee until his innocence is proven. The AMMA later issued a press release saying that it has "accepted his request".

'Soft peddle'

" Although the investigation in the rape case is progressing, it is clear that he has committed a crime by revealing the identity of the victim. But, we did not expect the organisation to soft-peddle the issue and get a letter from someone who is absconding. There is a lot of difference between AMMA asking him to step down and him deciding to stay away," she said.

Kerala to seek George's bail cancellation

He was arrested on Sunday for hate speech; State to probe non-appearance of public prosecutor

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala hovernment is poised to challenge the Magistrate's decision to release Kerala Janapaksham (Secular) leader P.C. George, ex-MLA, on bail in the politically charged hate-speech case.

On May 2, the State would move a petition in the district court seeking Mr. George's bail cancellation. The police had arrested Mr. George from his residence in Erattupettah in Kottayam early on May 1.

They had booked him on the charge of making incendiary comments against a particular group of people with the intention to cause communal discord and provoke rioting.

Meanwhile, Kerala Law Minister P. Rajeev told press-persons the government would probe the allegation that the non-appearance of the public prosecutor at Mr. George's bail plea hearing, despite the gravity of the offence, had advantaged the politician.

P.C. George

High-voltage drama

Mr. George's Sunday arrest had triggered a high-voltage political drama. Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI) workers pelted Mr. George's vehicle with eggs en route from Kottayam to Thiruvananthapuram.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) workers demonstrated in support of Mr. George.

The police denied Union Minister of State for External Affairs and BJP leader V. Muraleedharan permission to meet Mr. George. Mr. George's remarks at the Ananthapuri Hindu Maha Sammelan had stirred controversy and drawn flak from organisations on either side of the political spectrum.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)] had accused him of raising a false alarm on divisive dog-whistle issues such as "Love Jihad" and Islamic fundamentalism.

The CPI(M) State secretariat said that Mr. George had wilfully demonised a particular community to stir-up communal hate.

Deliberate remark

He had pandered to forces pushing to reshape the country into a Hindu majoritarian polity by rendering minorities a subaltern tribe. His remark was not off the cuff but deliberate, the CPI(M) said.

Leader of Opposition V. D. Satheesan had said Mr. George's "incendiary statement" was extremely explosive that it would "set light to water".

Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) leader P. K. Kunhalikutty said people should rise above partisan politics and condemn the dissemination of such misinformation and hate speech that lays the ground for communal discord.

However, Mr. George has found support from the Sangh Parivar. Sources close to him said Mr. George had merely echoed the issues flagged by some segments of the Church.

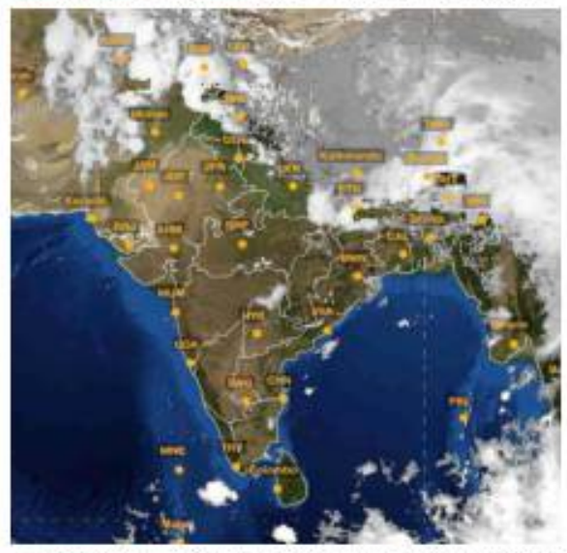
RSS leader to visit

Meanwhile, top Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) leader Rampal is scheduled to arrive in Kerala on a high-profile visit to meet Christian community leaders.

His Kerala tour has ignited political interest against the backdrop of the current controversy and the RSS-SDPI retaliatory murders in Palakkad. Mr. Rampal is also scheduled to call on Kerala Governor Arif Muhammad Khan and the ruling family of erstwhile Travancore.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Tuesday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh. Thunderstorm with lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Meghalaya, Odisha, Telangana, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Kerala and Andaman & Nicobar Islands

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	–	34.2	24.8	Kozhikode	–	35.2	27.7
Ahmedabad	–	42.9	27.3	Kurnool	–	41.4	30.4
Aizawl	7	28.1	18.9	Lucknow	–	37.7	26.7
Allahabad	–	39.7	27.2	Madurai	–	40.2	26.4
Bengaluru	54	32.5	20.2	Mangaluru	–	33.9	25.6
Bhopal	–	42.0	27.5	Mumbai	–	34.7	27.6
Bhubaneswar	–	37.7	26.5	Mysuru	12	35.2	19.0
Chandigarh	–	37.2	29.6	New Delhi	–	40.8	27.4
Chennai	–	39.2	26.4	Patna	–	36.5	25.0
Coimbatore	0.4	35.2	23.0	Port Blair	5	32.8	26.2
Dehradun	–	35.2	23.3	Puducherry	–	35.6	26.2
Gangtok	4	–	13.8	Pune	–	38.4	23.2
Goa	–	34.0	26.5	Raipur	–	41.0	28.2
Guwahati	1	28.1	22.5	Ranchi	–	34.0	21.6
Hubballi	–	36.0	22.0	Shillong	24	20.1	12.4
Hyderabad	–	40.9	28.8	Shimla	6	25.9	13.0
Imphal	12	27.7	19.4	Srinagar	–	29.3	14.0
Jaipur	–	44.4	29.3	Thiruvananthapuram	–	34.3	26.8
Kochi	42	31.6	24.4	Tiruchi	–	39.8	26.5
Kohima	2	26.0	12.4	Vijayawada	–	41.0	28.5
Kolkata	9	33.7	21.9	Visakhapatnam	–	36.8	26.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing — **Yesterday**

CITIES	SO₂	NO₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	11	12	..	232	143	
Bengaluru	5	19	39	71	88	
Chennai	11	19	50	102	61	
Delhi	19	46	61	260	219	
Hyderabad	5	21	29	90	110	
Kolkata	6	96	44	30	48	
Lucknow	10	73	57	227	159	
Mumbai	21	24	30	113	274	
Pune	12	24	116	89	70	
Visakhapatnam	16	28	20	47	86	

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Bathinda, Punjab recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 274 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Ernakulam, Kerala recorded a healthy AQI score of 38

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Two arrested after minor girl's death due to food poisoning

Many fall ill after consuming shawarma

STAFF REPORTER
KASARAGOD

Two persons have been remanded in custody in connection with the death of a 16-year-old girl and hospitalisation of 31 more after consuming shawarma at Charvathur in Kerala, on Monday.

The Chandera police have taken into custody Managing partner Mulloli Anasgar, a resident of Mangaluru and Sandesh Rai from Nepal, who prepared Shawarma at the shop operating at the Charvathur bus stand.

Meanwhile, the shop came under attack and was damaged by the people agitated over the death of the girl. The vehicle owned by the shop was also set on fire by unidentified people on Monday morning.

The Food Safety department authorities confirmed that the cool bar was operating without a license. Though Ahmed, the owner of the shop had applied for a license online last January the system rejected the application, officials said.

12 shifted to Kannur hospitals

STAFF REPORTER
KANNUR

At least 12 children, who suffered food poising after eating Shawarma have been shifted to Kannur hospitals on Monday. While eight children have been shifted to Kannur Government Medical College Hospital, four others are being treated at a private hospital in Kannur. They were undergoing treatment at hospitals in Charvathur and Kanhangad.

Meanwhile, 31 children between the age group of 10-16, who ate the Shawarma from the shop are also hospitalised after they suffered diarrhoea and vomiting. They are said to be stable.

Nilgiris sees a surge in arrival of tourists

STAFF REPORTER
UDHAGAMANDALAM

With the summer festival nearing in the Nilgiris, tourist footfall has increased substantially, leading to a huge crowd at the district's major tourism spots since the end of last week.

The Fruit Show in Kotagiri on May 7 and 8 will be the first event of the summer festival. The main event, the 124th Flower Show, will begin on May 20. Tourists have started thronging all the major parks and gardens since last week, according to officials from the Department of Horticulture. The officials said the average number of tourists to the Government Botanical Garden in the Nilgiris increased from around 3,000 during the weekdays to around 5,000.

"The numbers have increased to more than 20,000 a day during the weekend especially on Sunday when around 21,000 people visited the garden," said an official. The Horticulture Department is planning ahead for the summer festival season, with preparations already under way to decide the floral arrangements for the flower show.

R. Suntharalingam, a visitor from Dharapuram in Tiruppur district, said he and his family had decided to visit the Nilgiris to escape the extremely hot weather in his hometown. The rise in tourist flow has led to a significant increase in the number of vehicles in Udhagamandalam, Coonoor and Kotagiri. Police presence has been strengthened in these towns.

GST signals

Record revenues can smoothen upcoming Centre-State reform parleys

The first month of the new financial year has yielded a sharp surge in Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections, taking them well past ₹1.67 lakh crore – the highest, by a wide margin, in the five years since the levy was introduced by subsuming myriad State and central duties. In fact, GST revenues have scaled fresh highs in three of the last four months, having hit ₹1.41 lakh crore in January and ₹1.42 lakh crore in March. Overall GST revenues had grown 30.8% in 2021-22 to ₹14.9 lakh crore, despite slipping below the ₹1 lakh crore mark for two months when the second COVID-19 wave raged. The 20% year-on-year revenue uptick this April could be seen as a comforting signal about 2022-23 revenue prospects for policy makers at the Centre and the States, whose treasuries are fretting about the prospect of income falling off a cliff from this July when the assured compensation for implementing the GST comes to an end. Compensation cess levies will persist till at least March 2026, but they will be used to pay off special borrowings of 2020-21 to bridge revenue shortfalls and recompense States. The Centre needs a mechanism to expedite payment of outstanding compensation dues to States (₹78,700-odd crore, or four months of dues). The Finance Ministry has blamed 'inadequate balance' in the Compensation Cess fund, and promised to pay up 'as and when' the requisite cess accrues.

If overall GST collections sustain around April levels, a dialogue with States on their pending dues along with those that will accrue from now till June, could become less thorny. But the conversation needs to begin soon. The GST Council, which has not met properly since September 2021, must be convened at the earliest. Higher tax inflows backed by improved compliance, should give the Council more flexibility to approach the impending rationalisation of the GST rate slabs, beyond a mere scramble to fill coffers and factor in larger socio-economic considerations. The Centre, which called the April inflows a sign of 'faster recovery', must also state whether these revenue levels warrant a rethink of its concern that the effective GST tax rate had slipped from the revenue-neutral rate envisaged at its launch. A clear acknowledgement is also needed that the higher revenues are not solely driven by a rebound in economic activity. Persistently higher input costs facing producers for a year and their accelerating pass-through to consumers, seen in higher retail inflation, have contributed too, along with tighter input credit norms introduced in the Union Budget. That revenue growth from goods imports has outpaced domestic transactions significantly in recent months, also suggests India's consumption story is yet to fully resurface. Urgent policy action is needed to rein in the inflation rally and bolster consumer sentiment, so as not to sink hopes of more investments, faster growth and even greater revenues.

No short circuits

Safety is an imperative and should be built into the cost and utility of electric vehicles

A spate of incidents related to the burning of electric vehicles (EV) has resulted in the Union government announcing an expert panel to investigate the battery explosions causing them and a few manufacturers recalling batches of electric scooters after some caught fire. EVs have increasingly become a viable transportation device, with more than 11 lakh electric/battery-operated vehicles registered in India (Vahan database, April 2022). The increase in the utilisation of EVs has also been largely helped by the significant reduction in costs of lithium-ion batteries that have fallen by an estimated 89% since 2010. With climate change concerns driving governments, including India's, to incentivise the shift to EVs, their manufacture for commercial use has undergone an acceleration with an increase in indigenous companies in the Indian market as well. The enhanced use of EVs and utilisation of the underlying technology is welcome as despite the institution of fuel emission norms and building these into fossil fuel-driven vehicles, the shift to EVs from petrol and diesel ones is expected to gain significant net environmental benefits. But it must also be remembered that the Li-ion battery packs that form the core of the technology, are sophisticated devices and there should be no compromise on the inbuilt safeguards.

As an energy storage scientist explained in *The Hindu* ('FAQ' page, May 1, 2022), battery fires occur due to the convergence of heat, oxygen and fuel, and the controlled manufacturing of devices is specifically required to prevent these. Engineering higher safety into EVs can result in higher costs but the smooth functioning of Li-ion batteries without accidents is reliant on the absence of "shoddy engineering" and "cutting corner approaches". With long-term device changes in Li-ion batteries such as the use of solid state electrolytes, special safety switches, etc. still some time away in implementation, the onus is on manufacturers and regulators to ensure that testing and certification standards related to battery management systems such as devices that prevent accidental shorting of the cells, and thermal management solutions among others are met in existing EV systems and supply chains. Union Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari has said that the Ministry of Road Transport will issue guidelines for EVs which would include tests for compliance with specific safety norms. While the regulation of a fledgling albeit growing sector that has shown a lot of promise but requires adequate safety norms to be put in place is an imperative, manufacturers and other companies in the EV supply chain should also proactively work in recalling defective batches of vehicles and ensuring safety compliance to prevent the recurrence of mishaps.

A grand old party, the demanding path to its revival

The Congress's decline is to be seen in the context of majoritarianism as well as internal factors

ZOYA HASAN

The Congress party is no stranger to crises, but those it has faced since 2014 are unprecedented and probably the worst in the course of its long history. The party reached a historic low of 44 Lok Sabha seats in 2014 and that only increased to 52 in 2019. It has lost 39 out of 49 State elections since 2014. It managed to win only 55 of the 690 seats in the recent Assembly elections held in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Manipur and Goa. A series of leaders have deserted the party – even those close to the Gandhi family. These defeats and desertions have raised questions and concerns about its very survival. The fact that Congress leaders held extensive talks with a much sought-after election consultant, and was planning to employ his services to revamp the party, brings into sharp relief the existential crisis of the Congress. How do we understand Congress's existential crisis, and what are the prospects of revival?

A platform that does not work

Historically, the Congress had always come to power on a centrist platform reflecting its varied social base, but centrism does not work in a deeply divided polity dominated by a politics of polarisation and communal mobilisation. Essentially, the old form of accommodative politics, which for long held together the Congress's social coalition, is not capable of galvanising the imagination of new India. The Gujarat model of politics marked by an exclusive focus on individual leadership as the driver of election campaigns, a strong sense of Hindu pride, a shift in popular attention to aggressive nationalist appeals regardless of reality or facts, and a complete rejection of the entire democratic past and superimposition of perception over performance appears to hold voters in thrall. Changes unleashed by liberalisation, globalisation, and the information-communication revolution initiated by the Congress have undercut its political ethos and ideological architecture to a greater degree than that of its principal rival. The Congress's decline (and that of other Centre-Left and Left parties) needs to be seen in the context of transformations provoked by the growth and expansion of neoliberalism and majoritarianism, and other factors that are internal to the Congress, most notably, the strong resistance to structural changes within the party.

The party's main problems

The Congress has faced three major structural problems in a political conjuncture defined by 'the great moving Right show', to borrow a phrase from cultural theorist Stuart Hall, and the polarisation engendered by it. These include the leadership issue, organisational stagnation, and the need to project and propagate a clear ideological alternative to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). I have explored these themes in my recent book on the Congress and am taking up some aspects of that here.

The Congress's leadership crisis has undoubtedly played a role in its decline; however, the challenge facing the party is not just about the ineffectual leadership. Simply appointing a non-Gandhi will not dramatically alter the party's dwindling fortunes. In fact, removing them might well reinforce the right-wing agenda. What the

FILE PHOTO/PTI

Congress needs is an organisational regeneration, with democratisation at the front and centre. But fundamental issues concerning organisational change have been repeatedly set aside and weighed down by the debate on dynastic leadership and an obsessive focus on the Gandhis.

It is, however, important to reconstitute the party's leadership at various levels through internal elections. This can transform the Congress into a more representative organisation and could give a boost to the party by changing the perception that it is a family business. At present, the top decision-making bodies are occupied by people who have either never contested a Lok Sabha or Vidhan Sabha election or did so decades ago. Their influence has however grown in direct proportion to the weakening of the party across India. These structural problems have existed for years, and yet the party has not faced them head on. It has demonstrated no urgency for drastic remedial measures despite defeat after defeat. The feeble attempts at revitalisation have focused more on regaining quick electoral viability than on addressing long-term structural issues.

Short on communication

By far the Congress's biggest shortcoming is its inability to communicate its ideological positions and values clearly. The great challenge is to define its message and communicate it to the electorate as an underpinning for political mobilisation. For this, it must unequivocally reaffirm its inclusive vision for a democratic India, and take credit for its past achievements, which resulted from an adherence to these commitments.

One big failure has been the Congress's reluctance to tell its own story. The party did not publicise or highlight its distinctive approach, and that was one reason why it did not play to its strengths during the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) rule, allowing itself to be outsmarted by its critics. The BJP has correctly calculated that so long as it sustains the argument that the Congress was elitist, corrupt and dynastic, it can prevent the Congress from emerging as a credible alternative. What aids and abets these half-truths is the passivity of the Congress in defending its record and letting its achievements to be dismissed and derided, even as the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government successfully obfuscates data on its own underperformance in the last eight years.

Combating the communal

The key issue for the Opposition is defining its response to Hindu nationalism. While the Congress is largely agreed on the necessity of combating communal ideas, politics and policies, it has swung between making ideological compromises with majoritarian nationalism and plotting a frontal battle against it. It has often adopted a majoritarian tenor on certain controversial issues in the name of religious sentiment. However, this makes no sense amidst the growing influence of the Hindu Right. Both as a strategy and as an actuality, the mixing of religiosity and politics does not guarantee electoral dividends. Moreover, the conflict in India is not about the growing prominence of Hinduism in our public life, which most parties accept and promote, but about the BJP's idea of nationalism, which is utterly exclusivist, pitted against the inclusive nationalism championed by the Congress during the freedom struggle.

Indian politics has never been more polarised than it is today; never before has the gulf been so wide. Hence, today, the battle is more fundamental; it is about the very idea of India – the idea of a diverse, pluralistic nation committed to liberal values. By remaining silent on the way in which nationalism has been redefined, the Congress has ceded the nationalist space to Hindu Right which poses as the pre-eminent torch-bearer of nationalism today even though organisations associated with it made no contribution to the freedom struggle, the crucible which defined Indian nationalism from which they were absent. Yet, its conception of Indian nationhood which it has fought for has prevailed, over the past decade and more, against the Congress's inclusive 'Idea of India'.

Defending a pluralist view of politics and governance is one aspect of the political strategy; the other is grounding its politics in the idiom of social justice which both sidesteps identity politics and resonates with an aggrieved population, alienated by the current dispensation's policies and politics. Overall, the 137-year-old party's revival depends on three things – a consistent narrative to counter divisive politics, the will to restructure the organisation, and drawing strength from constant public action rather than just elections.

Zoya Hasan is the author of the recently published book, 'Ideology and Organization in Indian Politics: Polarization and the Growing Crisis of the Congress Party (2009-19)'

DC and Delhi engagement as a two-way street

Shaping opinion in Congress is a continuous process and needs efforts beyond formal and informal official interactions

K.V. PRASAD

The recent visit of Congresswoman Ilhan Omar to Pakistan and her trip to Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir received condemnation from India, and the United States swiftly drew distance clarifying that the administration did not underwrite the journey by the Member of the House of Representatives from Minnesota.

As the centre

The Capitol Hill has a distinct place in the United States Constitution and its separation of powers. Members of the legislative branch work independently to write laws for the administration to implement. The Members of Congress take a special interest in foreign policy and carry out regular oversight over policies pursued by the government across the globe. These could be on a track different from the official policy pursued by the administration of the day. It is said each member's thoughts on foreign policy are like that of the Secretary of the State.

Over the past couple of years, much water has flown down the Potomac in Washington DC and the nature of representation in the United States Congress has undergone a change in terms of the issues members pursue. These in turn also depend on the nature of the districts, its constituents, issues of interest to the member and the larger political debate.

On issues with reference to countries or developments, views on the Hill are shaped by a combination of factors including outreach from the country at the official level, engagement of the diaspora with Members of the Congress and staff, advocacy and professional lobbies at work. These provide continuous inputs that supplement independent status papers published by the Congressional Research drafted by subject experts.

At times, the House or the Senate organises hearings on country/issue-specific subjects, for example the Senate Sub-Committee on Asia held last month on U.S. policy towards India, where, among other issues, Jammu and Kashmir figured. Some of these concerns do translate into a resolution, in turn having an amplifier effect. In the final run-up, what matters is a Congressional determination or passage of a legislation that binds the government.

Adding perspective, support

Today, while there are more Indian-Americans serving as Members of the House of Representatives than ever before, correspondingly, there is an exponential growth of the second generation of the community members who work in separate branches of the administration and the legislature, adding a different dimension. They bring to offices their own perspective which has been accumulated through personal exchange of information from friends in India and various public sources.

GETTY IMAGES

It is well established that there is bipartisan support for India in the U.S., especially the Congress, which means both the Democrats and the Republicans favour engagement and developing ties with the country, which in turn smoothens the work of successive administrations irrespective of which party enjoys a majority in Congress and has a President in the White House.

For instance, it took over two years of sustained work at all levels in the Congress before it passed the historic Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement (with India) amid determined opposition from the non-proliferation advocates on the Hill, a majority of them belonging to the Democratic Party. In the final stage, over 100 members on the House side and 13 Senators (including Independent Bernie Sanders) voted against it. It did not reflect the party line unlike the GOP Senators and a majority of Representatives who went with the decision of the Republican U.S. President, George W. Bush.

Among the Democrats who called a Nay was Congressman Jim McDermott, a founding member of the India Caucus. The vote reflected his commitment to non-proliferation that overrode his affection for India. A vote and stand taken by the Member does not follow party dictates but is driven by individual choice, unlike in India where the party takes a decision and members vote accordingly, and on important pieces of legislation through a whip.

Ilhan Omar raking up Kashmir in an Indian territory under occupation attracted sharp comment from New Delhi. Ms. Omar is known to advocate on issues such as education, environmental justice, immigration, and health care, while in the pursuit of foreign policy, the Congresswoman feels human rights, justice and peace should form the core and also represent domestic values. Her policy prescription does not favour sanctions or interventionist measures. Much of her public life work is well known as is her stand on issues of religion. Last December, she sponsored a Bill combatting international Islamophobia that was cleared by the House and is with a Senate Committee.

Migrating to the U.S. as a child from civil-strife torn Somalia, she got drawn towards public office, winning a seat in the Minnesota House five years ago by unseating an established incumbent from a district with majority comprising a white population. In her book tracking the changing political landscape, *People Like Us: The New Wave of Candidates knocking at Democracy's Door*, author Sayu Bhojwani noted: "Omar's ...campaign [for state legislature] mobilised multiple stakeholders... the young, immigrants, and progressives... beyond individual voters... organisers in the Black Lives Matter movement, the business community, local imams and media in the East African Community...around issues that directly affected these communities." Today, Ms. Omar is in a leadership role as the whip in the Democratic Party's Progressives Caucus which remains influential.

Is many layered

There are voices reaching out to offices across the aisle on the Hill which project a different perspective of what is happening in India and other parts of the world. There are a number of Members who form opinions based on varied inputs and articulate these at various fora.

The need to continue engagement with offices in the Congress, its emerging leadership and build a counter-narrative would require effort beyond formal and informal official interactions. It is a continuous process and a two-way street.

K.V. Prasad is a senior journalist and former Fulbright-American Political Science Association Fellow in the U.S. Congress

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

To read more letters online, scan the QR code

Oath and row

The subtle manner in which the oath in the "white coat ceremony" administered to greenhorns in the Madurai Medical college was replaced is condemnable (Page 1, May 2). The State's government's response is a befitting one. The wanton manner in which the Union Government is acting, bent on replacing English with Hindi, is one of the causes for creeping linguistic disharmony in India. The Union Government must stop its attempts to shovel Hindi down the throats of people in the non-Hindi speaking States forthwith.

C. SACHIDANANDA NARAYANAN,
Palayamkottai, Tamil Nadu

■ Strange things are happening in our country these days as a part of a 'revivalism'. The people of Tamil Nadu are passionately opposed to the imposition of Hindi. Then why try this again and again in an attempt to antagonise them? Why give room for the suspicion that an attempt is also being made to 'saffronise' medical education, knowing fully well that it is bound to be an exercise in futility? The State government's quick steps should send a message.

G. DAVID MILTON,
Marthandam, Tamil Nadu

■ Sanskrit may not be well spoken across the country, but the language has its significance and relevance. Books in Sanskrit are a treasure trove of knowledge. Is it a crime to take oath in an official language? We are only dividing people by language politics.

SRAVANA RAMACHANDRAN,
Chennai

■ Hippocrates is considered to be the father of modern medicine worldwide and the oath in his name is made the pledge for medical practitioners for many generations across the globe. But in whosoever's name it may be, the ethics and the values are the same for the noble profession. Indians are proud of the great doctors of ancient India. Perhaps the 'Charak Shapath' could be included with the Hippocratic oath. The main goal of the regulatory body must be to inculcate the spirit of noble profession in the minds and the daily practice of the budding doctor.

Dr. D.V.G. SANKARARAO,
Nellimarla, Andhra Pradesh

A 'faster recovery'

The Government may well pat itself on the back for GST collections touching record highs. But it is the higher prices which are responsible and not any economic recovery. The RBI is of the opinion that it is likely to take 12 years for the Indian economy to recover from the effects of COVID-19. Perhaps, the Finance Minister should also do something on the employment front?

ANTHONY HENRIQUES,
Mumbai

A century ago

I read with interest the snippet, "India's goal" (OpEd page, 'From the Archives', 'A Hundred Years Ago - May 2, 1922"), on nationalism and its double goal, the fulfilment of India's mission in the world. Sadly, the best envisaged plans have drifted, rather than us working hard and realising our own potential. It is a sad state of affairs to note that the best plans have not yielded the desired results, mainly due to a lack of focus.

BALASUBRAMANIAM PAVANI,
Secunderabad

Plastic use

Experts are not tired of sounding caution in the use of plastic. At the United Nations Environment Programme's fifth Environment Assembly, 175 countries are reported to have adopted a resolution to an internationally binding agreement towards ending plastic pollution by 2024. The fact is that a very negligible percentage of plastic created is said to be recycled. A good chunk, close to 91% may have found its way into the water bodies, resulting in irreparable damage.

K.V. SEETHARAMAIAH,
Bengaluru

LIC is more than a corporate powerhouse

Creating employment opportunities for women is fundamental to its identity

C. SARAT CHANDRAN

It is a tribute to the Nehruvian vision that the large number of institutions created in the post-independent era have withstood the test of time and many of them have risen to global standards. From oil to steel, dams to highways, from the iconic IITs to the prestigious Institute of design, they have covered almost every segment of economic activity.

Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, described them as temples of modern India. Undoubtedly, India's emergence today as an economic powerhouse rests on the foundation of these remarkable institutions created in the early years of free India.

In 1947, India with a population of 345 million, a per capita income of ₹249.6 and literacy rate of 12% was one of the poorest countries in the world. Even amidst such an environment of deprivation and low income, Nehru felt the importance of social security and the need for promoting a culture of insurance. Thus, was born the idea of a state-run Life Insurance Corporation and LIC was established on September 1, 1956.

The organisation remains a colossus capturing 75% of the life insurance business in the country. •REUTERS

Initiative for women

LIC has steadily grown in the past six decades and today with over 290 million policy holders and an asset value of ₹38 lakh crore ($520 billion), it ranks as one of the largest insurance companies in the world. Yet, when LIC celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2017, its biggest achievement was hardly mentioned – the fact that LIC created large scale employment for women right from its inception in 1956.

Thousands of women became LIC agents in the 1950s and 60s, when job opportunities were scarce. There was no entry barrier in terms of age or fixed time for work. Education requirement was a mere high school pass. Many of these women were housewives who could earn an extra income by selling LIC policies.

This was a period before the arrival of digital technologies and mobile phones. Very few households had landlines and these women had to sell the policies through personal contacts. In fact, most of them did not have any marketing experience, yet LIC was able to create a vast army of motivated agents and inspiring stories emerged from them.

Usha Sangwan, the first woman to become the Managing Director of Life Insurance Corporation of India described this initiative "as one of the great social experiments of the time, turning raw talents to mature professionals". LIC had an innovative reward scheme for the agents, offering a membership of exclusive clubs based on their performances. These clubs ranged from Manager's Club, progressively moving higher and higher to reach the top level of Chairman's club. Many agents climb these stairs fast to reach the top level to earn substantial amounts as commission.

A milestone in the history of India's insurance industry was the opening of the sector for private participation in the year 2000 and this caused widespread concern that LIC will find the competition tough and could very well be marginalised. Today, there are 24 private players in the life insurance space and many of them have foreign collaborations. Yet, LIC remains a colossus capturing 75% of the life insurance business in the country. Its claim settlement at 99.87% is far above the industry average of 84%.

Ms. Sangwan says, "much of the success has come from the incomparably dedicated twelve lakh agents. Many of them were women who have chosen a career that is essentially suitable for women's personality and talent. Their success in spreading the value of insurance is unimaginable".

Policies focused on savings

Innovation has been the single most important factor that underpins LIC's marketing strategy. In a country of vast poverty and low income, LIC recognised from the beginning that it cannot sell insurance as a risk cover on premature death. It therefore devised policies focussing on savings and the need for children's education and daughter's marriage which are fundamentals to family values in India. These policies also ensured that a part of the premium paid was returned at regular intervals before the maturity period, providing liquidity for emergencies. They simultaneously covered risk caused by death. LIC also differed from its new generation competitors in its marketing style and culture. While the private players concentrated on technology-driven marketing, LIC's approach was significantly people-centric.

Everything about LIC from its logo with its two hands protecting a flame to its focus on India's rural population has a powerful impact on ordinary lives.

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the highly publicised Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana for financial inclusion of over 300 million of the rural population on August 15, 2014, LIC was already there with its policies covering a rural population of 200 million.

It also established itself as a unique organisation among India's public sector enterprises. Yet that uniqueness is hardly recognised in India.

Skill India Mission

In his biography of master filmmaker Satyajit Ray, Andrew Robinson says, "Indians have an incredible capacity of ignoring home-grown success stories until the rest of the world discovers them".

The fact remains that LIC kept a low profile inspite of its many-sided achievements. When the Prime Minister launched the Skill India Mission, many foreign agencies and institutions saw a honeypot there and rushed to put their hands in. Yet no institution was more equipped to take on this massive task other than LIC of India.

Its over a million strong agents provide case studies that touch real India. It is this treasure of real-life situations that can form the basis of a strong skilling mission. The distinguished management guru C.K. Prahlad once observed that these case studies should be a part of the syllabus of management schools of India and must replace cases borrowed from foreign universities. LIC's training programme with its mix of online education and real-life case studies offer the best model for India's skill development programmes.

In India, education is more a means to find a job than a process to acquire knowledge. LIC's relevance comes from its track record of creating vast number of employment opportunities for ordinary Indians, male and female, urban and rural.

LIC is now at a transformational moment. Its listing on the bourses should lift LIC to be a part of the elite corporate community in India. Yet, the nation must not forget the fact that LIC was built on sweat and tears, pain and sacrifice of ordinary Indians. It is these democratic credentials that remain LIC's most valuable asset.

C. Sarat Chandran is Senior Fellow, London School of Economics

Delay and the pains of death row

The Supreme Court should step in and commute Balwant Singh Rajoana's death sentence

BALJEET KAUR

The Supreme Court has extended the deadline of April 30 by two months for the Centre to make a decision on Balwant Singh Rajoana's mercy petition, which is pending, with excruciating cost on the prisoner, for the last decade. Balwant Singh was awarded death sentence in the case of former Chief Minister of Punjab Beant Singh' assassination in 1995. A mercy petition was submitted by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) on his behalf in 2012. The President, Ram Nath Kovind, is to decide the fate of the petition after receiving a proposal from the Central government. The backdrop of the political history of this case indicates that the Centre may continue to avoid propelling the fate of Balwant Singh's mercy petition either way. In such a case, it may very well rest on the Apex Court to take the matter in its hands and end the pendency in line with the death penalty jurisprudence in India.

Mitigating circumstances

During his trial, Balwant Singh chose not to defend himself. In his statements, justifying his actions, he stated that Beant Singh was targeted as he was accountable for numerous deaths and disappearance of Sikh men in police custody during his tenure as the Chief Minister of Punjab. The High Court judgment records that Balwant Singh expressed his remorse over the killings of other "innocent persons", who died along with Beant Singh. Nevertheless, the death sentence was imposed on him first by the trial court in 2007, and confirmed by the Punjab and Haryana High Court in 2010. The sentencing carried out by these courts neglected the Supreme Court's mandate in *Bachan Singh vs State of Punjab* on stating special reasons before imposing the extreme punishment of death, as opposed to the norm of sentence of life, after their assessment of aggravating factors and mitigating circumstances, i.e. circumstances related to the crime and the convict's life history which exasperate and alleviate respectively, the death worthiness of the convict. However, in this case, the discussion on sentence by the two courts was limited to the act of crime and expression of remorse. No mitigating circumstances including jail conduct, were recognised and appreciated.

After March 31, 2012 was fixed for his execution, political wrangling took centre stage. In the uproar among the Sikh community, the community institutions swung into action to find ways to stall Balwant Singh's hanging. Shiromani Akali Dal's (SAD) government expressed its inability to find a hangman and said the decision on pardoning him would be taken by the Central government as the crime took place in Chandigarh, a Union Territory. The SGPC filed the mercy petition on Balwant Singh's behalf which has remained pending for all these years.

Request for a speedy decision

Balwant Singh has spent 15 years on death row out of the total 27 years of his incarceration. In these years, he sent applications under the Right to Information Act to the offices of the President of India, Central and State governments requesting a speedy decision on the mercy petitions filed on his behalf.

While the time spent by a prisoner incarcerated should be critical, it is often ignored in the face of political considerations. In Balwant Singh's case, the issue of pardoning him by accepting his mercy petition is taking the risk of appearing in support of a terrorist. Punjab's politico-religious movement of the 1980-90, along with an active militancy, brought the Sikh community in a conflict with larger nationalist sentiments. Balwant Singh's action is a part of this context. Hence, the decision on the mercy petition is rife with dual semantics of hurting a minority community, which is both a majority and politically powerful in Punjab, or appearing in support of a terrorist amidst State-propelled hyper nationalism, further amplified by the majoritarian politics of the BJP.

The findings of Project 39A's report 'Deathworthy', a study on mental health of prisoners on death row in India, show that the segregated, alienated and stigmatised experiences of being on a death row may result in mental illnesses. Balwant Singh has endured a delay of 10 years in the decision of his mercy petition. Altogether, he has been imprisoned for 27 years, with severe toll on his physical and mental health. Yet, the indecision from the executive is likely to continue, with political considerations dwarfing any legal precepts that are core to decisions on death penalty cases. In this light, the Supreme Court can step in and commute Balwant Singh's death sentence on account of undue delay in disposal of the mercy petition, amounting to torture and violation of his right to life under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution.

Baljeet Kaur is Mitigation Investigator with Project 39A, National Law University, Delhi. Views expressed are personal

STATE OF PLAY

Competing for Muslim votes

Political parties in Karnataka try to woo the community as Assembly polls inch closer

NAGESH PRABHU

Certain attempts to polarise votes on communal lines have gained ground in Karnataka, which is heading to Assembly polls barely a year from now. While the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) hopes to reap a rich harvest by consolidation of Hindu votes, the two opposition parties – Congress and Janata Dal (Secular) – have backed the Muslim community in varying degrees on a slew of issues that have been raked up, be it Muslim girls not being allowed to wear hijab in classrooms or disallowing Muslim traders to set up shops during festivals at Hindu temples. There is a political one-upmanship between the two to boost their "Muslim-friendly" image.

Meanwhile, players like All India Majlis-E-Ittehadul-Muslimeen (AIMIM) and Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) are keen to carve their spaces in the political arena. Though AIMIM and SDPI have been floating candidates, they might at best become "spoilers" for non-BJP entities as in other States. The tussle for electoral space is bound to become more intense with the entry of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP).

With the space getting crowded, the Congress and the JD(S) are in the race for giving political posts to Muslim leaders. JD(S) appointed former Union Minister C.M. Ibrahim as the president of its State unit.Congress has appointed U.T. Khader as deputy leader of the party in the Assembly. It has elevated Mohammed Nalapad, considered a protégé of State Congress president D.K. Shivakumar, as president of the party's youth wing.

Muslims constitute nearly 13% of the State's population. In the 2018 polls, Congress and JD(S) fielded 17 Muslim candidates each, largely in north Karnataka. While seven Congress candidates were successful, JD (S) drew a blank. In the by-elections held to Sindagi and Hangal constituencies in 2021, JD(S) fielded Naziya Shakeel Ahmed Angadi and Niyaz Shaikh, respectively. Both lost their deposits. The ruling BJP, banking on the Hindu vote bank, had not fielded a single Muslim candidate either in 2018 or in by-elections.

The JD(S) contends that its Muslim candidates lost in the 2018 Assembly elections due to the then chief minister Siddaramaiah's "false narrative" of branding JD(S) as "BJP's B team." The Congress leader alleged that JD (S) tried to divide the Muslim votes to help the BJP. However, it was a different story that after the fractured mandate, Congress and JD(S) formed the coalition government which eventually collapsed.

In the run-up to the next elections, the JD(S) has been taking credit for providing 4% reservation for Muslims in education and jobs and says it has every right to seek minority community votes. But it was the Devaraj Urs-led Congress government in 1977 which first passed the order for providing quota for Muslims under Other Backward Classes. This was challenged in the High Court and commissions were set up to review the OBCs list. Finally, in the process of fixing OBC quota at 27% as per the Mandal Commission case, the Muslim quota was fixed at 4% in Category II (B) in 1995. The same quota continues to this day.

Traditionally, Muslims have been voting for the Congress. There is a belief among political parties that Muslims vote en bloc strategically to defeat the BJP. With the BJP and right-wing organisations unlikely to end raking up communally-sensitive issues till the Assembly polls, it would be interesting to see whom Karnataka's Muslims would look to, to protect their interests. With more than one contender in the fray to stake claim to their votes, it is a moot question as to whether there will be a consolidation of votes at all.

nagesh.p@thehindu.co.in

DATA POINT

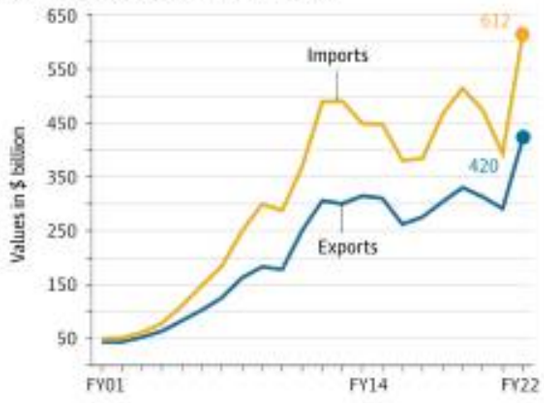
Perspective on the $400 billion export mark

In FY22, India's exports crossed the $400-billion mark for the first time ever. However, the import bill also passed $600 billion. The steep climb in both the figures is a reflection of soaring commodity prices in the international markets due to the pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war. In fact, the upsurge in imports in FY22 widened the trade deficit to its highest level in two decades. The export peak achieved in FY22 was due to the rise in the value of commodities, rather than their volume. This is exemplified when exports are expressed as % of GDP (market prices). In FY22, despite the peak in absolute terms, exports as a % GDP were relatively lower than the levels recorded in FY14. Meanwhile, the foreign exchange reserves were at a nine-month low in March 2022.

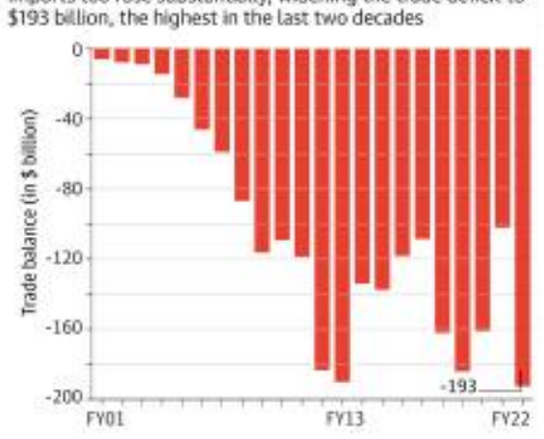
By **The Hindu Data Team**

1. In absolute terms

The chart shows India's imports and exports in $ billion. While the exports crossed the $400-billion mark in FY22, the imports too grew substantially and crossed the $600-billion mark. The drastic rise in the value of imports and exports is a reflection of high commodity prices due to COVID-19 and the Russia-Ukraine war

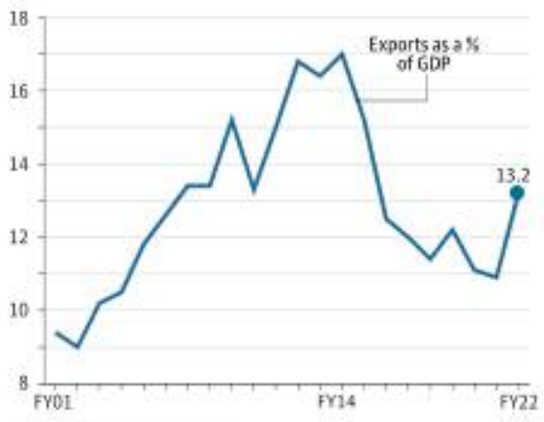


2. Widening trade deficit | The chart shows India's trade balance (in $ billion), i.e. the difference between exports and imports. While the exports expanded, imports too rose substantially, widening the trade deficit to $193 billion, the highest in the last two decades



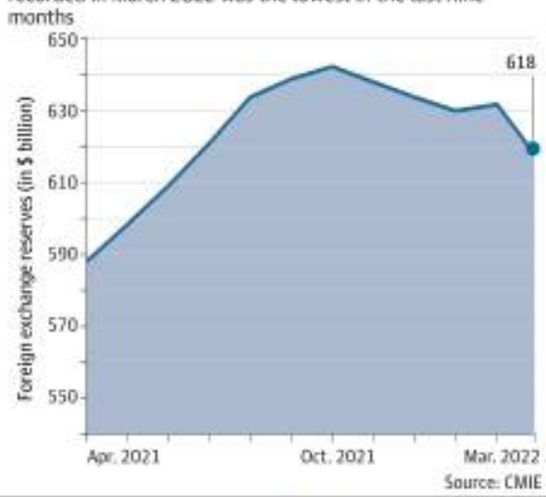
3. Exports as a share of GDP

The chart shows India's exports as a % of GDP (market prices). While exports peaked in absolute terms in FY22, as a % of GDP, it is relatively lower than the highs recorded in FY12 and FY14



4. Easing reserves

The chart depicts India's foreign exchange reserves at $ billion for FY22. The $618 billion foreign exchange reserves recorded in March 2022 was the lowest in the last nine months



Source: CMIE

The Hindu.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 3, 1972

Russia's new submarine missile

London, May 2: The Soviet Union has flight-tested a new submarine-launched ballistic missile with a range of more than 3,000 miles, the International Institute of Strategic Studies reported. The Institute said that after surpassing the United States in land-based missiles, Russia now seemed likely to catch up with America's substantial lead in strategic missile-carrying submarines by the middle of next year – sooner than had been foreseen. The institute did not foresee a major war in the 1970s since "the Nuclear King's peace seemed to eliminate that fear". Half the Soviet combatant surface fleet will be equipped with missiles by 1975, the institute said. Russia is also building a new nuclear-powered attack submarine, and its long-range submarines had been significantly improved in construction and weapon systems. However, the United States steadily pushed the qualitative improvement of its strategic nuclear forces, the survey said. The Chinese are building a new twin-jet fighter, a new radar system and improved, Soviet-type SAM2 ground-to-air missiles, the study said.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 3, 1922

On the verge of Civil war

Another fervent effort is being made to stop the outbreak of civil war in Ireland. The trouble in the north has been temporarily stayed by the Collins-Craig agreement but the terms of this arrangement are not recognised by the militant Republicans either on the Ulster border or in the southern countries. This extreme movement has, in fact, gone beyond the control of Mr. De Valera himself, for that gentleman has declared that he has no desire to make an appeal to arms at this juncture. The ultra-Republicans, however, seem at present to be the dominating element in the Irish military forces and nothing effective has yet been done to bring them under the control of the civil power. The authority of the Provisional Government is repudiated and a position has been reached in which armed force appears to be a determining factor. This state of things is roundly condemned by all the responsible and Pacific sections of the Irish people. With a view to putting an end to it, the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin and the Lord Mayor of that city (both ardent supporters of the Irish cause) have invited Mr. Collins and Mr. De Valera to a conference, from which it is hoped a truce will result.

FROM PAGE ONE

No one can be forced to get vaccinated, says SC

Dr. Puliyel, represented by advocate Prashant Bhushan, argued that certain vaccine mandates notified by States, including those that made vaccination a precondition for accessing any benefits or services, were violative of the rights of citizens and unconstitutional.

The Bench said courts had the authority to review whether the government's interventions into the personal autonomy of an individual and right to access means of livelihood met the "three-fold" requirements as expounded in the Constitution Bench judgment in K.S. Puttuswamy case (the judgment which upheld the right of privacy under Article 21).

The three-fold requirements include whether the legality of the limitations imposed by the government on individual rights presupposes the existence of a law. That is, the limitations should be backed by a clear statutory law. Second, the need for limitations should be proportionate to a legitimate state aim. Third, there should be rational nexus between the state's objectives for imposing the restrictions and the means adopted to achieve them.

Adverse events

The court directed the Centre to set up a virtual public platform at the earliest to facilitate individuals and private doctors to report adverse vaccine events without compromising privacy.

The Bench including Justice B.R. Gavai, in a judgment, held that India's paediatric vaccination policy against the COVID-19 virus was in tune with "global scientific consensus" and the opinions of expert bodies such as the World Health Organization, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

However, the court held that materials published by the government did "not warrant the impression that the emergency use authorisation for Covishield and Covaxin vaccines was given in haste without thorough review of the data".

The court reiterated that subject to the protection of the privacy of individuals, with respect to ongoing and future trials, "all relevant data to be published under the statutory regime must be made available to the public without undue delay".

The court concluded that the Union government's current vaccination policy met the requirements and "cannot be said to be unreasonable and manifestly arbitrary".

The policy reflected the "near unanimous views of experts on the benefits of vaccination in addressing severe infection, oxygen requirements, hospital and ICU admissions, mortality rate and stopping of new variants from emerging".

The court hence "suggested" that, as long as the infection rate remained low or until any new development or research justified the imposition of "reasonable proportionate restrictions on unvaccinated individuals", all authorities, including private organisations and educational institutions, review their restrictions for the time being.

Local militants' count on the wane in Kashmir, says Army

Aadhaar cards recovered from 2 slain foreigners in a recent encounter

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Security forces were engaging more foreign militants during encounters in Kashmir because the number of local militants has dropped, according to Lieutenant-General D.P. Pandey, General Officer Commanding (GoC) of the Army's 15 Corps.

"A majority of foreign militants were staying quiet and pushing local youth to the forefront to carry out attacks. Of late, the number of local militants has gone down significantly and the foreigners were feeling compelled to come out of their hideouts. This is why security forces were able to establish contacts [during encounters]," he said during a media interaction in Srinagar.

Lt. General Pandey, who has been assigned a new job, flagged the issue of recovery of valid Aadhaar cards from two foreigners killed in a recent encounter. "This indeed is a challenge. If a person [foreign militant] comes out during a live encounter, having a valid Aadhaar card, it is difficult to challenge him," he stated. He reiterated that infiltration had dropped since the agreement between India and Pakistan in 2020.

Few options: The decline in participation of locals is pushing foreign militants to come out of their hideouts. • FILE PHOTO

"This year, only one infiltration attempt was made and was foiled by alert troops. No major infiltration was reported from across along the LoC this year. A robust counter-infiltration grid has been put in place by the Army on the LoC," he noted.

Narco-militant module

Meanwhile, the police on Monday said they busted an inter-district narco-militant module and arrested two Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) "militant associates" along with 800 grams of heroin and arms in north Kashmir's Baramulla district. "During a routine joint checking at Chenad crossing, the Baramulla police and the Army's 52 RR stopped two persons travelling in a tipper. During the search, 800 grams of contraband heroin-like substance was recovered from the vehicle. Both persons were arrested," the police said.

The arrested youth were identified as Nisar Ahmad Khan from Khahmoh area of Rafiabad, Baramulla, and Mohd Rafiq Khan from Lountha area of Tanghdhar, Kupwara. "They admitted that they were working with the LeT and in close contact with handlers of the LeT across and working with LeT associates/ overground workers. Upon their disclosure, one AK 47 magazine, 15 live rounds of AK 47 and one Chinese grenade were recovered from the stepney of the vehicle," the police said.

States told to expedite scheme for disabled

Beneficiaries selected from 75 districts

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

As part of the celebrations of 75 years of Independence, the Union Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry has asked the States to speed up implementation of the Unique Disability ID (UDID) scheme for persons with disabilities (PwD) who have been selected for their connection with the Freedom Struggle from among 75 districts across India.

In a letter to the States on April 29, the Department of Empowerment of PwD under the Ministry said the Rural Development Ministry had selected the UDID programme as a part of its 90-day campaign ending on July 27 in districts "selected on the basis of unsung heroes of India's freedom struggle" under *Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav*.

The campaign aimed for 100% coverage of 17 Central schemes in the 75 districts, it said.

For the UDID project, the department said the targets were to clear all pending applications, digitise data of PwD who had been issued manual certificate and generate UDID cards for them and register those PwD with 40% disabilities who had not been enrolled onto the UDID portal yet.

Publicity programmes

Apart from this, the Ministry suggested intensive publicity programmes, setting up of district-level committees to oversee the progress and holding camps along with the rural development authorities, alongside camps for other Central schemes.

Among the selected districts are Ballia in Uttar Pradesh, native place of Mangal Pandey; Purba Midnapore in West Bengal, the home district of Matangini Hazra; and Alirajpur in Madhya Pradesh, where Chandra Shekhar Azad was from.

CBI books Choksi in yet another case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered yet another case against Gitanjali Gems Limited, its fugitive director Mehul Choksi and others for allegedly cheating the IFCI Limited of ₹22.06 crore.

In its complaint, the IFCI Limited alleged that during 2014-18, it had disbursed the entire loan amount of about ₹25 crore to Gitanjali Gems on the basis of pledged shares, gold, diamonds and jewellery.

The accused soon started defaulting on load repayments. In order to recover the defaulted amount, IFCI Limited invoked the pledge and got a fresh valuation of the pledged jewels done. Their valuations dropped by 90% from the declared figures, revealing that they were pledged by projecting a highly inflated value.

MHA report flags NSCN-IM attacks

The Naga group was responsible for 44% of insurgency-related incidents in 2020

VIJAITA SINGH
NEW DELHI

The Isak-Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-IM) was involved in 44% of insurgency related incidents in Nagaland in 2020, the annual report of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has said.

In 2015, the Union government signed a framework agreement with the NSCN-IM, one of the largest Naga groups, to find a solution to the Naga political issue. The negotiation is yet to be concluded.

Before this, the Government of India signed a formal ceasefire agreement with the NSCN-IM in 1997 and it was extended indefinitely since 2007.

A ceasefire agreement was signed by the Centre and NSCN-IM in 1997.

Split into many groups

The umbrella NSCN group that came into being in 1980 following the failure of the 1975 Shillong Accord has further split into many groups. According to the 2019-20 annual report of the MHA, these insurgent groups are the NSCN (IM) led by Thuingaleng Muivah, the NSCN (K), NSCN/NK led by Neopao Konyak-Kitovi and the NSCN/R led by Y. Wangtin Konyak.

"Though steps have been taken by the government from time to time to control insurgency, the NSCN factions continue to indulge in factional violence and other violent/illegal activities affecting normal life in the State," the 2019-20 report said.

The 2020-21 annual report said that, "Presently, various factions of the NSCN viz. NSCN(NK), NSCN(R) and NSCN(K-Khango) are under ceasefire with the Government of India. Currently, only one faction of the NSCN/K-Yung Aung faction, largely based in Myanmar, remains active," it said.

The report added that in 2020, Nagaland witnessed a 45% decline in the number of violent incidents compared to 2019 (2019 - 42, 2020 - 23) and the State witnessed no civilian and security forces' deaths in the year.

Counter-insurgency

"Counter-insurgency operations led to neutralisation of two insurgents, arrest of 222 insurgents and recovery of 84 weapons in the State in 2020. The NSCN/IM accounted for about 44% of the insurgency incidents in the State during 2020. In 2020, the number of kidnapping/ abduction cases declined by 33% compared to 2019 (2019 - 49, 2020 - 33)," the report said.

It added that in Arunachal Pradesh, the Naga insurgent groups were involved in perpetrating violent incidents. It said the NSCN-IM was involved in 11 incidents, the NSCN/K-YK in five incidents and the NSCN/U and ENNG in two and one incidents respectively.

As many as 21 cases of kidnapping were reported in Arunachal Pradesh in 2020.

"While Mizoram, Sikkim and Tripura remained by and large peaceful, there is a marked improvement in the security situation in other States of the region. In 2020, insurgency-related violence declined by 42% in Arunachal Pradesh, 12% in Assam, 23% in Manipur and 45% in Nagaland compared to 2019," the MHA report said.

IN BRIEF

HC stays arrest of former AAP leader

CHANDIGARH

The Punjab and Haryana High Court on Monday stayed the arrest of former Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and poet Kumar Vishwas in connection with a case of allegedly making 'inflammatory statements' against Delhi Chief Minister and AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal, accusing him of having links with 'separatist elements'. Granting Mr. Vishwas an interim relief, Justice Anoop Chitkara observed that it is a fit case for this court to prevent the abuse of the process of law.

Hardik drops Congress from Twitter profile bio

NEW DELHI

In yet another sign of distancing himself from the Congress, Hardik Patel, the working president of the Gujarat Congress, has dropped the party name from his Twitter profile bio. The move has triggered buzz about his putative exit just months before elections in the State. Lately, the young leader has publicly criticised the Congress leadership while appreciating the BJP and its decisive leadership. The Congress's "hand" symbol has also been removed. In recent years, many leaders who have exited the Congress have usually dropped the first hint by changing their Twitter profile bio.

HC permits Nizamuddin centre to remain open

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday permitted certain portions of Nizamuddin Markaz, which has been closed since March 31, 2020, to stay open till October 14. Justice Jasmeet Singh extended the interim order passed on April 1 on reopening certain portions of the premises in view of Ramzan and Id. The court had clarified that only religious prayers and namaz will be allowed during this period. "No Tablighi activities" will be allowed on the premises, the court had specified.

Two more arrested for Jahangirpuri violence

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police have arrested two more accused in connection with the communal clashes that broke out in northwest Delhi's Jahangirpuri on April 16 during a procession on Hanuman Jayanti. The police nabbed Yunus, 48, brother of Saleem Chikna who has already been arrested, and Sheikh Salim, 22, on Sunday night, they said, adding that both are residents of Jahangirpuri. With the arrest of the two, the police have nabbed a total of 32 people, including three juveniles, in the case so far.

Manufacturing quickens, input costs rise: PMI

While there was some improvement in business confidence levels in the first month of the new financial year, overall optimism remained subdued with several firms noting that the year ahead is difficult to predict. Most producers did not change their employee strength in April, but a few reported a mild increase, largely as firms are still operating below their current capacity limits.

"A major insight from the latest results was an intensification of inflationary pressures, as energy price volatility, global shortages of inputs and the war in Ukraine pushed up purchasing costs," said Pollyanna De Lima, economics associate director at S&P Global.

Companies had responded by hiking their fees to the greatest extent in one year.

"This escalation of price pressures could dampen demand as firms continue to share additional cost burdens with their clients," Ms. De Lima noted, stressing that growth expectations remain subdued.

Decide on mercy plea of Rajoana, SC tells Centre

In his petition to the Supreme Court from his cell, Rajoana had said his repeated requests made to the government about the fate of the mercy plea was met with silence. He had called the delay "inexplicable".

The court said the law was settled that once the government had decided to recommend a Presidential pardon for a condemned man, the pendency of appeals in the Supreme Court of his co-accused cannot delay the process initiated under Article 72 [Presidential pardon] of the Constitution.

The court had taken serious exception to the government's delay in coming to a decision and sought an action taken report by April 30. The court had warned that the Home Secretary and the Director (Prosecution) of the CBI would have to be present if the government did not respond.

However, the government had argued that the mercy petition was filed by an organisation and not Rajoana. It had again taken up the argument that the appeals of fellow convicts in the case was still in limbo.

The court, however, countered that the government had communicated with him directly on several occasions. Besides, the Bench said the current writ petition being heard was filed by Rajoana himself.

North India may get respite from heat: IMD

However, no significant change in maximum temperatures over Gujarat and Maharashtra is expected in the next two days.

But temperatures are expected to rise again in the northwest, central India, Gujarat and Maharashtra in the latter half of the week. No significant change in maximum temperatures are likely over the remaining parts of the country.

Light, moderate, isolated rainfall accompanied with thunderstorm and lightning was very likely over Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh-Gilgit-Baltistan-Muzaffarabad, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand in the next 24 hours.

SC to hear plea on hate speech against Muslims

Jamiat's petition to come up on May 9

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court agreed to hear on May 9 a petition filed by the Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind for action against the repeated instances of hate speeches against Muslims across the country.

A Bench led by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar said the court would examine the plea by Jamait national president Maulana Mahmood A. Madani, who said hate speech feeds into a system of discrimination and has a cumulative effect on the dignity of a group/community.

The petition cited inflammatory speeches made by Yati Narasinghanand Saraswati, the anti-Muslim slogans made at the Jantar Mantar rally, the campaign and protests against Friday 'namaz' in Gurugram where protesters disrupted congregations at designated plots by spreading cow dung, rallies held in Tripura in which derogatory slogans were made against the Prophet, speeches made by Suraj Pal Amu and Santhosh Thammaiah, and so on..

U.P. police accused of killing daughter of accused

SHO suspended; investigation ordered

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

The police in Uttar Pradesh's Chandauli district have been accused of allegedly beating to death the daughter of a person accused under the Gangster Act after barging into their house during a raid on Sunday.

While the family of the deceased woman, who was in her early twenties, accused the police team of murder, a case was registered against the personnel for culpable homicide not amounting to murder. The local Station House Officer was suspended, even as a probe was launched into the death.

The cause of death remained unknown after the autopsy and the viscera was sent for forensic examination, Chandauli Superintendent of Police said on Monday. Action would be taken against the police personnel if any negligence was found in the standard operating procedures (SOPs) to be followed by them, he said.

On May 1, a police team reached Manrajpur village in search of Kanhaiya Yadav with a non-bailable warrant. Yadav had been booked under the Gangsters Act, said the police.

'Cannot isolate trade from investment, climate issues'

Netherlands Ambassador stresses investment protection

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

It is not possible to isolate trade from other issues related to trade including investment and the climate while negotiating a free trade agreement (FTA), Netherlands Ambassador to India Marten Van den Berg stressed on Monday.

"We, as Europeans, think that one cannot isolate trade from other very relevant dimensions connected to trade," Mr. Van den Berg said, when asked if the European Union could not settle for a quick EU-India FTA focussed on areas of mutual agreement, with more thorny issues set aside for separate resolution. "Economics, trade and investments are very much connected - 70%-80% of global trade is connected to investments. If we invest in each other's societies, you must also have dialogues on how we address environment issues and climate challenges," he emphasised, adding it didn't make economic sense to have just a tariffs focussed pact.

"Our view is that there is a joint responsibility for the public and private sector to ultimately save our planet. So that's why we connect trade with environment but also trade with social issues," he said while on a visit to the office of *The Hindu*.

"When a company does business in a country that does not have an investment protection agreement, then the premium for insurance against risk of investment loss is higher," he observed. "Companies look for two things - certainty and transparency. An investment protection agreement gives certainty," he added, highlighting the significance of investment protection in trade negotiations.

In tandem: Marten Van den Berg called for joint action from the public and private sectors to save the planet. • PICHUMANI K.

> **If we invest in each other's societies, you must also have dialogues on how we address environment issues and climate challenges**

'A year's target'

"The target [timeframe] to finalise the trade agreement is one year. If we can agree on the investment protection aspect then that would have a positive impact on investments."

Asked if India's position on the conflict in Ukraine was influenced in part by the West's response to India's border problems with China, he said: "It was never framed that way. I am not sure if that was case, but it was not framed that way."

The Dutch government was sensitive to India's concerns, the Ambassador said, adding: "We are aware of the tensions and the situation between India and China, and also of China's position on security issues in the South China Sea. We are very much aware of the maritime security tensions. Netherlands was also one of the few European nations that had a policy paper on the Indo-Pacific that was welcomed by India."

No victory for anyone in Russia-Ukraine war: PM

In the first leg of his Europe visit, Modi signs agreements with Germany on partnership for sustainable development

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BERLIN

India believes no country would emerge victorious in the Russia-Ukraine war as all will suffer losses, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday, after holding talks with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz as both leaders reiterated the need for an immediate cessation of hostilities.

Addressing a joint press event with Mr. Scholz after co-chairing the 6th inter-governmental consultations between the two nations, Mr. Modi said India was concerned over the humanitarian impact of the conflict and had provided aid to Ukraine.

Warm reception: Narendra Modi greeting the Indian diaspora in Berlin on Monday. • PTI

Mr. Modi, who arrived here on Monday morning on the first leg of his three-nation Europe trip that will also take him to Denmark and France, held talks with the German Chancellor on key areas of bilateral cooperation under the overall strategic partnership.

He also invited German participation in India's Atmanirbhar Bharat campaign.

The two leaders inked the Joint Declaration of Intent establishing the Indo-German Partnership for Green and Sustainable Development under which Germany intends to strengthen its financial and technical cooperation and assistance to India with a long-term goal of at least €10 billion of additional commitments till 2030.

On the Ukraine crisis, Mr. Modi said from the start, India called for an immediate cessation of hostilities and stressed that talks were the only solution to resolve the dispute. "We believe that there will be no victorious party in this war and all will suffer losses. Therefore, we are on the side of peace," the Prime Minister asserted.

Mr. Scholz said that through its attack on Ukraine, Russia has violated fundamental principles of international law.

A joint statement issued after the talks said "Germany reiterated its strong condemnation of the unlawful and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine by Russian Forces".The statement further said Germany and India expressed their serious concern about the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and "unequivocally condemned" civilian deaths in Ukraine.

In a joint statement, both countries also stressed the significance of a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific and underlined the importance of unimpeded commerce and freedom of navigation in accordance with international law.

Germany is going to maintain and intensify its various commitments on the ground and India is amongst its very important partners in the region, the German Chancellor said.Mr. Modi and Mr. Scholz strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including any use of terrorist proxies and cross-border terrorism, the statement said.

G-7 summit

In his remarks, Mr. Scholz said he has also invited Mr. Modi to the G-7 summit in Germany and emphasised that India's role is important in the global economy, and climate change talks.

The Prime Minister also held an interaction with the Indian community in Germany as part of his visit. He urged the members of the diaspora to help take India's products to the global stage.

German firms urged to invest in India's youth

Business leaders discuss cooperation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BERLIN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday highlighted the reforms undertaken by his government as he interacted with Indian and German business leaders, urging them to invest in India's youth.

The event saw participation of top representatives from the governments of both countries and CEOs of several firms from both sides, who engaged in discussions on topics ranging from climate cooperation, supply chains, and research and development.

"The Prime Minister emphasised on the broad-based reforms carried out by the government and highlighted the growing numbers of start-ups and unicorns in India," the Ministry of External Affairs said in a press release. "Ways to further vitality of partnerships" were discussed, the MEA tweeted.

The Indian business delegation was led by Sanjiv Bajaj, President Designate, CII Chairman and Managing Director, Bajaj Finserv.

Baba N. Kalyani, C.K. Birla, Puneet Chhatwal, Salil Singhal, Sumant Sinha, Dinesh Khara, C.P. Gurnani and Deepak Bagla were part of the Indian delegation.

The German business delegation included representatives of Siemens, BASF, Bosch, Volkswagen, GFT Technologies Schaeffler and Deutsche Bank.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar too participated in the meeting.

Prashant Kishor hints at starting own political outfit

He is expected to disclose his plans in Patna on May 5

NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI

Poll strategist Prashant Kishor said on May 2 last year, the day the results of the West Bengal Assembly election was announced, that he would be leaving the strategy space and exploring politics for himself. Exactly a year later, he announced on Twitter that he was "turning a page", hinting at the formation of a new political outfit based on "Suraaj" or good governance, starting from his home State of Bihar.

"My quest to be a meaningful participant in democracy and help shape pro-people policy led to a 10-year roller-coaster ride. As I turn the page, time to go to the Real Masters, THE PEOPLE, to better understand the issues and path to 'Jan Suraaj' - Peoples Good Governance. Shuruat #Bihar se (starting from Bihar)," he tweeted. He is expected to elaborate on his plans at a press conference in Patna on May 5.

> **Time to go to the Real Masters, THE PEOPLE, to better understand the issues and path to 'Jan Suraaj'**
>
> PRASHANT KISHOR
> Poll strategist

The announcement comes after talks between Mr. Kishor and the Congress on the former joining the party fell through. Sources close to Mr. Kishor told *The Hindu* that while plans to launch a political party were yet to fructify, the exploration of issues leading to the formation of a political party had started.

"Just as Gandhiji did not at once come up with his political and social ideas, he travelled and went among the people to understand what their real problems are before giving shape to his ideas, so will Prashant Kishor," said a source. "The idea is, of course, to possibly move to electoral politics, but not on the basis of any 'model' like Gujarat model or Kejriwal model or this or that, but on ideas of good governance. The tweet says the beginning is to be from Bihar, therefore its clear that it's not limited to Bihar alone," said the source.

The Indian Political Action Committee, a company associated with Mr. Kishor, has however signed up with the Telangana Rashtra Samithi last week and it is not clear what role the outfit will play in his future political project.

No political space for Kishor, says JD(U)

But Chirag Paswan welcomes poll strategist's move

SOBHANA K. NAIR
AMARNATH TEWARY
NEW DELHI/PATNA

Political parties in Bihar have reacted with caution on political strategist Prashant Kishor's announcement of beginning his political journey from Bihar. The Janata Dal(U) said there was no space for any regional or national outfit in a State where the Nitish Kumar government was functioning well.

Welcoming the move, Chirag Paswan stated that there was an urgent need in Bihar for leaders who are willing to work rising above the caste lines. Speaking to *The Hindu*, he said Bihar was in dire need of leaders who were committed to working for its development.

"Even after so many years, where the other States have progressed, Bihar is still fighting for the basic necessities. We are still struggling for roads, water connection, education, employment and medical facilities. Ultimately, it is for the State people to take the call. We need leaders who will work beyond the caste lines and compulsions of alliance politics," he observed.

Friendlier times: In this photo dated June 9, 2019, Prashant Kishor, centre, is seen with Nitish Kumar and K.C. Tyagi. • PTI

JD(U) secretary general K.C. Tyagi told *The Hindu*, "Any individual or group of people can form any political outfit. But as far as Bihar is concerned, the government of Nitish Kumar is going very well on all the developmental indices. There is no scope for a regional or a national outfit to the Nitish model of governance in the State."

RJD reaction

The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) is watching the development from a distance.

"What exactly is Mr. Kishor's objective. We so far do not know. In 2015, when Nitish Kumar was going to take oath as Chief Minister, Mr. Kishor accompanied him. Nitish *ji* had gone ahead and declared him as the future of Bihar and then they publicly fell out. Anyway, political parties cannot be formed overnight. You can't simply press a button to erect an institution. We shall wait and see," party leader Shivanand Tiwari said.

Meanwhile, Mr. Kishor has started building the ground to construct his political outfit. On Monday, he met noted Right to Information (RTI) activist Shiv Prakash Rai and social activist Guddu Baba at Patna's Sheikhpura House to discuss Bihar's political situation.

Sources close to Mr. Kishor told *The Hindu* that he would meet around 100 social activists, intellectuals and members of civil society from across the State in the next few days to explore possibilities of his imminent plunge into politics.

Mr. Kishor is likely to meet social activist Mukesh Hisaria, Pravez Aziz, Irfan Alam and others. He is expected to visit Bihar districts beginning in June.

Bypolls to 3 Assembly seats on May 31

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission on Monday announced bypolls to three Assembly seats, including Champawat in Uttarakhand where Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami is set to contest.

Polling for the seats, including Brajarajnagar in Odisha and Thrikkakara in Kerala, would be held on May 31 and the counting of votes on June 3, according to the schedule. Mr. Dhami lost the Khatima seat during the Uttarakhand Assembly election in March. In April, the BJP MLA from Champawat, Kailash Chandra Gahtori, resigned to make way for Mr. Dhami.

Counting of votes will be held on June 3, the EC said. The nomination process will begin on May 4 when the notification will be issued. May 11 will be the last date for filing nominations.

EC sends notice to Soren over office-of-profit charge

Jharkhand Mukti Morcha has denied allegations

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission has sent a notice to Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren over an office-of-profit charge against him for allotment of a mining lease in his name last year, an EC official said on Monday.

Under Section 9A of the Representation of the People Act, Mr. Soren could face disqualification for entering into a government contract. The Opposition BJP in the State had raked up the issue earlier this year, demanding the resignation of the Chief Minister.

Former Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das had alleged that Mr. Soren misused his office by allotting a stone quarrying lease in his name on government land outside Ranchi while he was also the Mines Minister. Mr. Soren's party, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, has denied the allegations, saying the mine was never functional and Mr. Soren surrendered the same.

The BJP had made a representation to Governor Ramesh Bais, who then sent a reference to the EC to examine the matter.

Section 9A of the Representation of the People Act deals with disqualification of a lawmaker for entering into a government contract.

Hemant Soren

The notice has been issued keeping the provisions of the section in mind. The commission *prima facie* has found he violated provisions of Section 9A.

"A person shall be disqualified if, and for so long as, there subsists a contract entered into by him in the course of his trade or business with the appropriate government for the supply of goods to, or for the execution of any works undertaken by, that government," reads the section.

The EC had recently written to the State government to share the documents related to the mining lease.

CBI has registered 58 cases on post-poll violence in Bengal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has so far registered 58 cases pertaining to post-poll violence in West Bengal, following a directive from the Calcutta High Court in August 2021.

The agency, which recently submitted a fresh status report to the High Court, has arrested 224 accused persons and filed 26 chargesheets.

The CBI had earlier received 29 complaints of sexual assault from the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) allegedly in connection with the post-poll violence in West Bengal last year. Two complaints were referred to the State's special investigation team on the grounds of the nature of offences, while 26 were taken up by the agency for probe. The State police had referred 64 incidents to the CBI in pursuance to the High Court order. Of these, 21 were returned to the State police based on the nature of offences.

भारत सरकार/Government of India
अंतरिक्ष विभाग/Department of Space
भारतीय अंतरिक्ष अनुसंधान संगठन /Indian Space Research Organisation
राष्ट्रीय सुदूर संवेदन केंद्र/National Remote Sensing Centre
बालानगर, हैदराबाद/balanagar, Hyderabad 500 037

ADVERTISEMENT NO. NRSC/RMT/2/2022 Dt. 02.05.2022
NOTIFICATION FOR CONTRACT EMPLOYMENT
NRSC invites applications for following post(s) on Contract basis:

POST CODE	NAME OF THE POST	NO. OF POSITIONS
01	Quality Manager (QM)	01

For detailed advertisement candidates are advised to visit NRSC website: www.nrsc.gov.in
Last Date for Receipt of Applications: 23.05.2022
"Government strives to have a workforce which reflects gender balance and women candidates are encouraged to apply"

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
Buildings (C&M) circle, Tirunelveli – 627 002.
TYPE OF CONTRACT: LUMPSUM
(Pre Qualification (Two Cover System) & Rate Tender System)
Short Term Tender Notice No : 04/2022-2023 / Dated: 02.05.2022
For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu sealed Tenders are invited from the contractors registered in Public Works Department in the appropriate class to the office of the Superintending Engineer, PWD, Buildings (C&M) circle, Tirunelveli.
Tender Schedule Available Date : 05.05.2022 to 19.05.2022 Upto 5.45 PM.
Tender Schedule Receiving last Date : Up to 3.00 PM on 20.05.2022
Tender Opening Date : At 3.30 PM on 20.05.2022.
Total No. of Work : 1
Total Approximate Value of Works : Rs.5620.00 Lakhs.
For further details and tender documents visit the website www.tenders.tn.gov.in and www.tntenders.gov.in
DIPR/2103/Tender/2022
Superintending Engineer PWD.,
Buildings(C&M) circle, Tirunelveli-2.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, KENDRAPARA-JAJPUR.
AT/PO- NAYABAZAR, CUTTACK -753004, Tel No. 0671-2444488, Email-serw_kpd@yahoo.com
No. Tender Online RCK-12/22 Letter No.- Date :-
e-Procurement NOTICE
1. Name of the work : Tender for the road projects of Constituency wise R.D Roads developed under MMSY Scheme during 2021-22 in the Dist. of Kendrapara-Jajpur
2. Class of contractor
a) Estimated cost more than Rs.6.00 Crore & upto Rs.15.00 Crore : Special Class & Super Class (of Odisha PWD) & relevant class of other licensing authorities.
b) Estimated cost more than Rs.3.00 Crore & upto Rs.6.00 Crore : A & Special Class (of Odisha PWD) & relevant class of other licensing authorities.
c) Estimated cost more than Rs. 40.00 Lakh & upto Rs.3.00 Crore : B & A Class(of Odisha PWD) & relevant class of other licensing authorities.
3. Time for Completion : As specified in the Column-6 of the Annexure.
4. Detail Projects : As per Annexure attached
5. Other Details :

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No	Availability of Tender on-line for bidding From	To	Last Date & Time of seeking tender clarification	Date & Time of opening of tender Technical Bid	Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Kendrapara-Jajpur	Tender Online RCK - 12/ 22	06.05.2022 at 11.00 A.M.	20.05.2022 to 05.00 P.M.	19.05.2022 up to 05.00 P.M.	21.05.2022 at 11.30 A.M.	Will be intimated later

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in
Chief Construction Engineer,
Rural Works Circle, Kendrapara-Jajpur
O-155
OIPR-25129/11/0011/2223

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HOMOEOPATHY
Jawahar Lal Nehru Bhartiya Chikitsa Avum Homoeopathy Anusandhan Bhavan
No.61-65, Institutional Area, Opp. 'D' Block, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110 058
Phone : (Direct) 011-28522906 E-mail : nchindia21@gmail.com Website : www.nch.org.in
Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

PUBLIC NOTICE

It has come to the notice of this Commission that some Homoeopathic Medical Colleges/Institutions are misguiding and misinterpreting the public (parents and aspirants) alluring for admissions in BHMS and MD (Hom.) courses in their Colleges and giving publicity that the students who have not qualified the NEET examination can take admissions in their Institutions/Colleges. Such information are false and misleading. The students who have not qualified NEET Exam may be permitted by the Colleges to fill the vacant seats after exhausting NEET qualified candidates list, as directed by some of the Hon'ble High Courts. Competent authority has already reduced 5 percentile in NEET-UG vide letter no. 30-02/2021-NCH/9071-9074 dated 30.03.2022.

All concerned are advised, that before taking admissions in the above courses without qualifying the NEET/AIAPGET Exam, must refer to the interim orders of the Hon'ble High Courts.

Secretary I/C
National Commission for Homoeopathy

MAHA MUMBAI METRO OPERATION CORPORATION LTD
(A Government of Maharashtra PSU)
4th Floor, NaMTTRI Building, Adjoining New MMRDA Building, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai – 400 051. E-mail:sushil.chandra@mailmmrda.maharashtra.gov.in
Website :https://mmrda.maharashtra.gov.in

e-TENDER NOTICE

Maha Mumbai Metro Operation Corporation Limited (MMMOCL) invites Open e-Tenders from eligible Bidders for the following work:

Support Services for Propulsion System and Train Control Management System (Hitachi make) provided on Train Sets supplied by M/s BEML for operation on Mumbai Metro Lines 2A& 7, for a period of three years.	
Estimated Cost	Rs. 11.68 Crore
Completion period of Work	Three Years
Cost of Tender Document	Interested bidders have to make online payment of INR 5900/- (inclusive of all taxes) non-refundable as Tender Processing Fee, using online payment gateway during bid preparation using Debit Card/ Credit Card/Net banking for the contract package.
Sale of Tender Document	From 03.05.2022 (at 18.01 hours) to 08.06.2022 (up to 18.00 hours) on e-tendering portal https://etendermmrda.maharashtra.gov.in for above work.
Last Date & Time of Submission	08.06.2022 up to 18.00 hours.
Date & Time of Opening of Envelop A & B	10.06.2022 at 15.01 hours.

Tenderers are requested to note that tender is being invited through e-procurement. Tender documents can be obtained online from MMRDA e-Tendering Portal : https://etendermmrda.maharashtra.gov.in. For detailed information and subsequent Addendum/ Corrigendum (if any), please log on to above e-Tendering Portal.

For any additional information & help for uploading & downloading the e-Tender, please contact MMRDA's e-tendering service desk at the following e-mail address: etendersupport@mailmmrda.maharashtra.gov.in or call on 022-26597445.

In case of any query/ clarifications, tenderers are requested to contact Shri. Sushil Chandra, Director (Maintenance) at his Email:sushil.chandra@mailmmrda.maharashtra.gov.in

Sd/-
Date : 03.05.2022 Director (Maintenance)
Place : Mumbai MMMOCL
Fulrani

IN BRIEF

Ex-Petroleum Secretary is new adviser to PM

NEW DELHI

Former Petroleum Secretary Tarun Kapoor has been appointed an adviser to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Personnel Ministry said on Monday. Mr. Kapoor superannuated as the Secretary of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas on November 30, 2021. "The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Mr. Kapoor, as adviser to the Prime Minister, in the PMO for two years," it said. PTI

Trinamool celebrates victory anniversary

KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday said that May 2 would henceforth be called '*Maa, Maati, Manush Divas*'. It is on this day last year that the Trinamool Congress registered a thumping victory over the BJP in the Assembly election, winning 213 of the 294 seats, to form the government for the third consecutive term in the State. *Maa, Maati, Manush* (Mother, Land and People) is the slogan of the Trinamool Congress. "I am ever grateful to our *Ma, Mati, Manush* for having shown to the high and mighty, last year on this day, the indomitable courage of Bengal," the Trinamool Congress chairperson said.

Two tremors hit Gir Somnath in Gujarat

VERAVAL

Two successive tremors of 4 and 3.2 magnitude jolted a village in Gujarat's Gir Somnath district on Monday morning, officials said. Residents of Talala village, located some 25 km from Veraval, woke up from sleep and ran out of their homes after experiencing the tremors, but there was no report of any casualty or damage to property, said officials. The first tremor of 4.0 magnitude was recorded at 6.58 a.m., with its epicentre 13 km north-northeast of the village, the Institute of Seismological Research (ISR) said. PTI

Haryana BJP MLA vows to make India 'Hindu Rashtra'

CHANDIGARH

A BJP legislator from Haryana took an oath on Monday to make India a Hindu nation. Ambala (city) MLA Assem Goel took the pledge along with others at an event held by a social organisation in Ambala. Later, the legislator told reporters that the vow taken by him was in capacity as a 'Hindu' and not that as a BJP MLA. He said he also favoured the Uniform Civil Code. In a video of the event that has emerged on social media, a group of people can be heard asserting that to ensure that India is declared a Hindu nation, they will, if needed make or take sacrifice.

SC apprised of school dropouts over COVID-related penury

Court told that there was no information about children who left school

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court's attention was drawn on Monday to the reality that an unaccounted number of children may have dropped out of school because their parents, though alive, lost their jobs or families got displaced during the COVID-19 outbreak.

So far, the court has mainly focused on identifying children orphaned or who have lost one of their parents to the pandemic. A Bench led by Justice L. Nageswara Rao learnt that very little was known about children who were forced to drop out of school during the COVID-19 upsurge when their families lost their sole means of sustenance. In fact, the court wondered whether children who dropped out because their parents lost their livelihood may equal, if not best, the number of children orphaned by COVID-19.

Though schools have resumed classes, many students remain at home out of difficult circumstances at home. • PTI

The Supreme Court's *amicus curiae*, advocate Gaurav Agarwal, said these children who left school to support their families had not got the attention they deserved. While authorities such as the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and the State governments were actively collecting data on COVID orphans, children who dropped out of school hardly get a mention for the sole reason that their parents or guardians were still alive.

He said such children also do not figure in the NCPCR's "Bal Swaraj" portal. There was no information, even on the Internet, about children who left school after their parents lost their jobs or the families got displaced due to migration of labour, the *amicus curiae* submitted. He said the only way forward to track these children would be to have the Education departments verify their details.

"Education is the fundamental right of these children... Why can't the State come to their rescue," Justice Rao asked. The court ordered the NCPCR to "ponder" over the issue raised by Mr. Agarwal and submit its suggestions for a way out on the next date of hearing. The Bench asked the States and Union Territories also to respond to the issue and come up with a course of action to "ensure that dropouts due to the adverse effects of COVID would not continue".

The Bench scheduled the hearing next week.

DGCA to inspect all SpiceJet aircraft after injuries to fliers

Two remain in ICU with injuries due to mid-air turbulence

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) will inspect the entire SpiceJet fleet of 91 aircraft after mid-air turbulence on Sunday left several passengers of a Mumbai-Durgapur Boeing 737-800 flight injured. Two of them are in the intensive care unit and one is in another ward.

The flight encountered severe turbulence during descent while preparing to land around 5 p.m. on Sunday. Fourteen passengers and three cabin crew were injured. The injuries were on the head, spine, shoulder and face, the aviation regulator said.

A view of the cabin of the turbulence-hit SpiceJet plane to Durgapur. • PTI

'Not up to scratch'

"As a precautionary measure, we have decided to examine the maintenance standards of SpiceJet's entire fleet. The airline has often been found wanting in this aspect. If needed, we may ground a few planes and ask the airline to address shortcomings before they are allowed to fly again," a senior DGCA official said.

The airline operates a fleet of 69 Boeing 737s and 22 Q-400s.

The DGCA has also offrostered the pilot, the co-pilot and the aircraft maintenance engineer who released the aircraft.

The regulator has categorised the event as an "accident". This means the investigation will now be handled by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau.

According to the International Civil Aviation Organization, there are three categories of occurrences – incidents, accidents and serious accidents. It is an accident if a person is fatally or seriously injured or the aircraft sustains damage or it goes missing.

Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia called the incident unfortunate and said the matter was being dealt with "utmost seriousness & deftness".

Over 1-crore cataract surgeries pending: govt.

'Campaign to clear backlog to start'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India currently requires 49-lakh surgeries to clear the backlog of blindness due to cataract and 53.63-lakh surgeries are needed to clear the backlog of severe visual disabilities due to cataract. Over the next three years, an addition of 61.58-lakh surgeries are expected to be added to both these groups, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Monday.

The delays were caused due to medical establishments slowing down surgeries due to the pandemic in the past two years, he said.

Cataract surgeries would be now done under a special campaign to clear the backlog and the States would be given guidance to conduct the same. "The government has proposed to increase the number of cataract surgeries to be carried out progressively in the financial year 2022-23 [75 lakh], 2023-24 [90 lakh] and 2024-25 [105 lakh]," he stated.

Ninety-three lakh cataract surgeries were performed between 2020 and 2022.

Mr. Mandaviya is also scheduled to chair the 14th conference of the Central Council of Health & Family Welfare (CCHFW), an apex advisory body of the Health Ministry, as "Swasthya Chintan Shivir", at Kevadia, Gujarat, from May 5 to 7.

"The objective of the three-day conference is to review the implementation of policies and programmes relating to the medical and public health sectors and to recommend ways and means for better implementation of these policies/programmes for the benefit of the common people," he said. The sessions will focus on themes such as affordable, accessible and equitable health for all, preparing India for future health emergencies, Heal in India and Heal by India, preparing a road map for Healthy India, and sharing of best practices in the health sector.

PM to visit Nepal for Buddha Purnima

This will be Modi's first visit to the country after being re-elected in 2019

SUHASINI HAIDAR
KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW YORK/NEW DELHI

Ahead of Buddha Purnima (birth anniversary) on May 16, the government is planning a visit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Lumbini in Nepal, the Buddha's birthplace recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, sources confirmed. Nepal Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba is expected to be in Lumbini to mark the occasion, the sources added.

The visit, which comes a month after Mr. Deuba travelled to India for a bilateral visit, is not expected to include a stop at Kathmandu at present.

The visit to Nepal will be one of three trips the Prime Minister will undertake in May, since he restarted international travel after the Omicron variant of the novel coronavirus spread.

He is currently touring Europe, and is expected to travel east for the Quad summit in Japan, expected to be held on May 23 and 24.

Close bonds: Narendra Modi during a visit to the Pashupatinath temple in Nepal in May 2018. • AP

While there are no formal bilateral discussions expected during the Nepal visit, the government is moving quickly to announce the next Ambassador to Nepal, to take over after Vinay Kwatra assumed office on Sunday as Foreign Secretary, to be in place before the visit.

Ties with Nepal, Bhutan

According to an official aware of the decision-making, South Block has considered a number of senior IFS officers who have served in Kathmandu or at the "North" desk that oversees ties with Nepal and Bhutan, and are fluent in Nepali, but eventually could choose an official with knowledge of regional dynamics, especially China, to head the mission in Nepal.

The Prime Minister's visit to Nepal will only last a few hours, and he is expected to pay his respects at the Mayadevi temple, which marks the birthplace of the Buddha, born as Prince Siddhartha Gautama, more than 2,500 years ago.

Mr. Deuba is also expected to attend the May 16 ceremonies, which are a part of a special three-day event planned for the first Buddha Purnima being celebrated since the pandemic broke out in 2020.

Lamp-lighting event

Temple trustees have told local media that the two Prime Ministers will take part in the lamp-lighting ceremony at the temple. According to the sources, the Ministry of External Affairs and security officials have already conducted a reconnaissance of the arrangements for the visit, as have Nepal's government officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Culture.

Mr. Modi will fly from Delhi to the recently inaugurated Kushinagar International airport, and then fly by helicopter to Lumbini, a short distance from the India-Nepal border.

This would mark Mr. Modi's first visit to Nepal since he was re-elected in 2019. In his previous term, he visited Nepal on four occasions, including twice in 2014 and twice in 2018.

HC to hear Mevani case on May 27

THE HINDU BUREAU
GUWAHATI/NEW DELHI

The Gauhati High Court on Monday stayed the adverse remarks made by a district judge against the Assam police while granting bail to Independent Gujarat MLA Jignesh Mevani in an assault case on April 29.

Hearing an appeal filed by the Assam government, Justice Devashis Baruah clarified that the order should not be interpreted as a stay on the grant of bail by the district judge.

Mr. Mevani was arrested on April 20 for an allegedly offensive tweet against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and a complaint was lodged in Kokrajhar district.

A. Chakravarty, the judge of the District and Sessions Court in western Assam's Barpeta, had observed that the second case was false and said the Assam police should undergo reforms to give credibility to their versions related to the killing or shooting of several alleged criminals in its custody.

The court has fixed May 27 as the next date of hearing of the case.

Addressing a press meet in New Delhi, Mr. Mevani said the arrest by the Assam police was a conspiracy at the behest of the Prime Minister's Office to 'destroy' him ahead of the Assembly elections. He announced that he would take to the streets and call for a Gujarat bandh on June 1 over a range of issues.

Probe team submits report on Mon killings

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The Nagaland government's Special Investigation Team (SIT), which probed the December 4 civilian killings in a botched ambush by Army commandos at Oting in Mon district, has submitted its final report to a local court.

Senior administrative and police officials in Nagaland confirmed that the report – a chargesheet – was submitted to the District and Sessions Court in mid-April. But a district official said the report would be resubmitted after the public prosecutor made some additions.

"The contents of the report cannot be divulged now," a SIT member said.

According to the Mon official, scrutinising a report to make it a watertight case for prosecution or trial was a routine practice.

In case of alleged crimes committed by the Central forces while discharging official duties, prosecution sanction is required to be obtained from the Union government before submitting a chargesheet in a court.

The SIT was constituted a day after 13 people were killed in the botched ambush and resultant violence. Two others – a soldier at Oting and a civilian in Mon, about 60 km away – were killed too.

Don't cause communal friction on Id: MNS chief

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PUNE

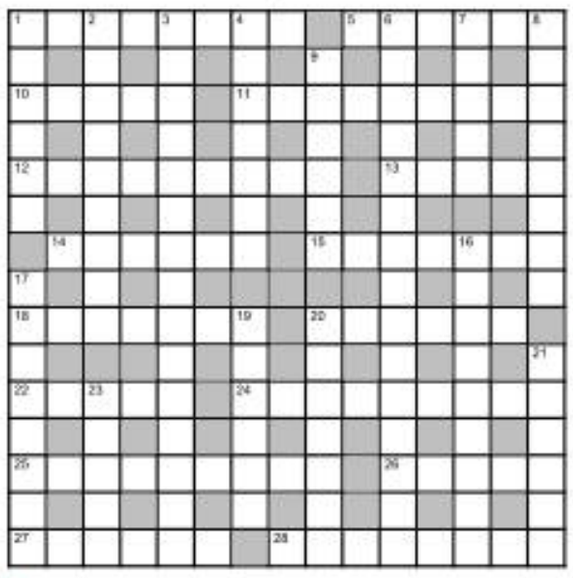
Maharashtra Navnirman Sena chief Raj Thackeray, who had earlier issued an ultimatum to the community and the State government to remove loudspeakers from mosques by May 3, urged his followers not to cause any communal friction on Id by performing 'aaratis'. Mr. Thackeray, who had said the MNS had no wish heighten social tensions, tweeted that the loudspeakers' issue was a social, not a religious problem.

TH CROSSWORD + 13546

(set by Dr. X)

Display keystrokes of genius. Type your answers in our online grids. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



ACROSS

1 Use sexier moves to enthrall college sweetheart (8)
5 Ignores urges to consume heroin finally (6)
10 Deception to get hold of complete genetic sequence (5)
11 Centre ordered – maintain distance, showing restraint (9)
12 Force returns to investigate about trouble in European city (9)
13 Posh woman in retro joint is not married (5)
14 Fixed grimace in onset of rabid seizure (6)
15 Frank in South African province, going round ancient city (7)
18 Stories of stars acting out after consuming dope (7)
20 Somehow stayed sober (6)
22 High-ranking Turk's infatuation with America (5)
24 Bill steals fancy earring, gets indicted (9)
25 Bomb went off outside court – ultimately shocked (9)
26 Creep with cold sore on left side of lip (5)
27 Score with woman enthralled by wine at end of party (6)
28 Confined goon smuggling kit with ecstasy (8)

DOWN

1 Some green campaigners settle in tents (6)
2 Authorising to stop endless revelry involving immorality (9)
3 Get in and naughtily discuss about grown-up who's willing to have sex (10,5)
4 Stumped by twists and turns (7)
6 Recover from shock and take care of shattered glass (4,2,3,6)
7 Rejuvenate in serene woods (5)
8 Scheming to trap mysterious revolutionary on island quickly (8)
9 Newts swimming across river dispersed (6)
16 Sacked revolting director, stark-naked in rave (9)
17 Jumbo plane he repaired on top of tarmac (8)
19 Taste of nougat in cool drink (6)
20 Rustled up a pastry (7)
21 Cutting power, rowed at sea (6)
23 Learn about bug's short bristles (5)

SUDOKU

		7			4			
	9	5		8	7	1		2
	8				2			4
		9			5			8
	1			9			6	
8			1			7		
5			7				9	
3		1	8	6		4	5	
			5			3		

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

Solution to puzzle 13545

T	O	M	G	R	R	O	W	
W		I		O		G		
A	R	R	O	G	A	T	E	
N		R		E		O		R
G	E	D	G	R	A	P	H	Y
S		R			U		O	
			D	I	F	F	S	
O		T		N				
F	O	R	E	V	E	R		S
C		A		E		A		P
O	N	I	O	N		C	H	E
U		N		T		E		C
R	U	S	S	I	A		S	T
S		E		O			R	
E	X	T	E	N	D		S	E

G	O	L	D	E	N			
	U		I		A			
A	T	E		A	T	L	A	S	T
	A		M		A			
H	Y		R	O	O	S	T	
	O		G		N		O	
T	H	U	N	D	E	R		
	E		S		Y			
S	I	O	E					
	P				C		M	
C	H	E	C	K	M	A	T	E
	E		S		A			
S	T	E	A	M	I	N	G	
	R		T		N		R	
S	E	A	S	H	O	R	E	

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

3	7	6	1	5	9	4	2	8
9	4	5	3	2	8	7	6	1
2	1	8	6	4	7	9	5	3
7	5	9	8	3	1	2	4	6
1	8	2	9	6	4	5	3	7
6	3	4	2	7	5	1	8	9
4	6	3	7	1	2	8	9	5
5	9	1	4	8	6	3	7	2
8	2	7	5	9	3	6	1	4

FAITH

Special prayers & Eid-ul-Fitr

Muslims around the world celebrate the Eid-ul-Fitr marking the end of the holy month of Ramadan, observed as a month of fasting, self-reflection, repentance, purification of the self, and pursuits of piety. The Eid is the celebration of the successful completion of the holy month and is an expression of gratitude to the God for the believers are rewarded. Celebrating this day, Muslims congregate at mosques and Eidgahs for a special prayer to express their gratitude to the Almighty. Every Muslim is obligated to offer zakat al-fitr to the needy before the celebratory congregational prayer to ensure that nobody goes hungry on the day of the Eid.

The holy month of Ramadan commemorates the first revelation of the Holy Quran and Muslims spent their day and night in prayers and recitation of the Quran. Muslims, through their prayers and fasting, seek to connect with the divine, cleanse their inner-self and build a society with character. Muslims stop their routine way of living as part of their efforts to realise the ethical self and the moral society Islam wants to create. This helps crush ego and arrogance, and annihilates greed and vanity. The fasting is self-regulated and it reflects the freedom bestowed on humans.

Fasting is not about mere abstinence from drinking, eating, and sexual pleasures. It is to augment piety, self-reflection, and self-restraint. It promotes the ethics of compassion, simplicity and kindness. For Muslims, faith (imaan), and piety can't be attained through formal ritualism alone, it requires believers to fulfil their responsibility to the fellow beings too. The spirit of Ramadan is to make the world a better place to live, which will be rewarded by the almighty God.

P.K Abdul Rahiman

China's economy falters amid COVID woes

Companies and investors unsure about how govt. plans to balance 'zero-COVID' approach and growth

ANANTH KRISHNAN
HONG KONG

A long-time China investor's declaration that the Chinese economy was "in the worst shape in the past 30 years" has underlined growing concerns over growth amid Beijing's continued emphasis on harsh COVID-19 lockdowns.

Those fears have deepened following latest data, released over the weekend, showing a slowdown in manufacturing and services to a two-year low.

The ruling Communist Party's Politburo met on Friday and pledged a slew of policies to support embattled sectors, from real estate to tech, which had already been reeling from regulatory interventions by the Xi Jinping government before the latest spread of Omicron cases and widening lockdowns.

The Politburo meeting, at the same time, said the country would follow the stringent "zero-COVID" approach favoured by President Xi.

That has left companies and investors unsure about how the government plans to meet what some analysts say are contradictory targets as it balances zero-COVID and growth.

Deepening crisis: Employees at work on a truck assembly line at a factory in Qingzhou in Shandong province. • AFP/FILE

Rare comments that emerged this past weekend from prominent investor Weijian Shan, chairman of Hong Kong private equity firm PAG and a major investor in China who has broadly been positive about the economy, portrayed a dire picture of the current situation in a private video with investors. This reflected the sentiment among many firms who are reluctant to publicly voice their concerns, according to observers in Hong Kong and Beijing.

'Worst shape in 30 years'

The economy was "in the worst shape in the past 30 years," he said in the private video, obtained by the *Financial Times*, adding that the market sentiment as well as public discontent were also in the worst state in three decades.

The more than month-long lockdown of Shanghai has had spillover effects likely to severely hurt growth in the second quarter. The economy grew 4.8% in Q1. Most economists say it is unlikely now that the government will meet its 5.5% annual growth target.

Data released this weekend showed activity in manufacturing and services sectors fell to a two-year low. The manufacturing purchasing managers' index (PMI) shrank to 47.4 from 49.5 in March, the Hong Kong-based *South China Morning Post* reported, while the official non-manufacturing PMI contracted to 41.9 in April from 48.4 the previous month.

The spillover impact of Zero-COVID curbs has also hit the agriculture sector because strict measures "have hampered the movement of farmers and materials," financial magazine *Caixin* reported last week.

While spring cultivation had begun, farmers in provinces with tight curbs such as Jilin, the second-largest province for corn production, said they were facing labour shortages and difficulties in securing seeds and fertilisers.

Movement of goods across provinces has also been severely impacted because provincial governments have been, on the one hand, tasked by Beijing to stamp out COVID-19, while, on the other, to keep transport channels open. Faced with the seemingly contradictory objectives, most local governments have so far prioritised maintaining zero-COVID over growth.

Many farmers have also been unable to work because of being placed under lockdown.

One farmer told *Caixin* he was unable to return home last month for spring planting as he was not given a travel permit because of COVID-19 curbs.

Israel slams Russia over Lavrov's Nazism remarks

The Minister had said that 'the biggest anti-semites were Jews'

ASSOCIATED PRESS
TEL AVIV

Israel on Monday lashed out at Russia over "unforgivable" comments by its Foreign Minister about Nazism and anti-semitism – including claims that Adolf Hitler was Jewish. Israel, which summoned the Russian Ambassador in response, said the remarks blamed Jews for their own murder in the Holocaust.

It was a steep decline in the ties between the two countries at a time when Israel has sought to stake out a neutral position between Russia and Ukraine and remain in Russia's good stead for its security needs in the West Asia.

Asked in an interview with an Italian news channel about Russian claims that it invaded Ukraine to "denazify" the country, Sergey Lavrov said that Ukraine could still have Nazi elements even if some figures, including the country's President, were Jewish.

Sergey Lavrov

"So when they say 'How can Nazification exist if we're Jewish?' In my opinion, Hitler also had Jewish origins, so it doesn't mean absolutely anything. For some time we have heard from the Jewish people that the biggest anti-semites were Jewish," he said, speaking to the station in Russian, dubbed over by an Italian translation.

In some of the harshest remarks since the start of the war in Ukraine, Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid called Mr. Lavrov's statement "unforgivable and scandalous and a horrible historical error."

"The Jews did not murder themselves in the Holocaust," said Mr. Lapid, the son of a Holocaust survivor. "The lowest level of racism against Jews is to blame Jews themselves for anti-semitism."

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett also condemned Mr. Lavrov's comments.

"His words are untrue and their intentions are wrong," he said. "Using the Holocaust of the Jewish people as a political tool must cease immediately."

EU slaps anti-trust charge against Apple

The tech firm is accused of blocking rivals from its iPhone payment system

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BRUSSELS

The EU accused Apple on Monday of blocking rivals from its popular "tap-as-you-go" iPhone payment system, opening a fresh battlefront between the U.S. tech giant and Brussels.

"The preliminary conclusion that we reached today relates to mobile payments in shops, by excluding others from the game," said Margrethe Vestager, the EU's anti-trust chief.

"Apple has unfairly shielded its Apple Pay wallets from competition. If proven this behaviour would amount to abuse of a dominant position, which is illegal under our rules," Ms. Vestager told reporters.

The European Commission, the bloc's competition watchdog, specifically charged the iPhone maker with preventing competitors trying to enter the contactless market "from accessing the necessary hardware and software... to the benefit of its own solution, Apple Pay".

The accusation is the latest salvo against U.S. tech giants by EU regulators, who have also taken aim at Apple's music streaming and e-book businesses.

Margrethe Vestager

The company is also a main target of the Digital Markets Act, a landmark EU law that will prohibit Apple and other US tech giants from privileging their own services in its products and platforms.

The EU's outline of the case came after the commission launched an investigation in 2020 that was fuelled by complaints from European banks that resist paying a fee to Apple in order to reach their customers via apps.

The battle comes as tech giants eye personal finance as a new moneymaker, with Google, Amazon and Facebook owner Meta also seeking ways to replace credit cards or the need of carrying a wallet.

New Zealand allows tourists after 2 years

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WELLINGTON

New Zealand welcomed tourists from the U.S., Canada, Britain, Japan and more than 50 other countries for the first time in more than two years on Monday after dropping most of its remaining pandemic border restrictions.

New Zealand reopened to tourists from Australia three weeks ago and on Monday to about 60 countries. Most tourists from India, China and other non-waiver nations are still not allowed to enter.

'Heavy fighting' in Ukraine's east

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KYIV

Ukrainian authorities were hoping on Monday to evacuate more civilians from the besieged southern port city of Mariupol, as Russia's offensive in the east of Ukraine continued with "active and heavy" fighting.

Kyiv said more than 100 civilians were evacuated over the weekend from the sprawling Azovstal plant, the last holdout of Ukrainian forces in Mariupol which has been surrounded by Russian forces since they invaded Ukraine on February 24.

They were awaited on Monday in Ukraine-controlled Zaporizhzhia, where vehicles from UNICEF and other international NGOs were on standby.

Delay in evacuation

In coordinated efforts between Ukraine, Russia and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), another evacuation had been hoped to start first thing on Monday but by lunchtime, there was no sign of movement.

Several hundred Ukrainian soldiers and civilians have been sheltering in the maze of Soviet-era underground tunnels underneath the steelworks, many of whom require medical attention.

Mariupol is an important strategic hub connecting the Russian-held southern and eastern parts of Ukraine and has seen some of the worst of the fighting.

After failing to take the capital Kyiv in the first few weeks of the war, Moscow's Army has refocused on the east of Ukraine, notably the Donbas region, which includes the pro-Russian separatist areas of Donetsk and Lugansk.

Fighting is particularly intense around Izyum, Lyman and Rubizhne, as the Russians prepare their attack on Severodonetsk, the last easterly city still held by Kyiv, Ukraine's general staff said.

ELSEWHERE

'Pak. govt. may suspend Nawaz's conviction'

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan government is considering suspending former PM Nawaz Sharif's conviction in corruption cases to offer him a chance to plead afresh before a court of law, according to reports. The 72-year-old three-time PM, against whom several graft cases were launched by the government of former PM Imran Khan, left for London in November 2019 after the Lahore High Court granted him four-week permission allowing him to go abroad for his treatment. P11

Tunisia announces 'national dialogue', without Opposition

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TUNIS

Tunisian President Kais Saied has announced the launch of "national dialogue" to help resolve a political crisis following his controversial power grab, but excluding critical Opposition groups.

Mr. Saied, a former law professor elected in 2019 amid public anger against the political class in the North African nation, sacked the government on July 25 last year, later moving to rule by decree in moves opponents dubbed a "coup".

In a speech late on Sunday, Mr. Saied said a commission would manage "the national dialogue", a measure demanded repeatedly by the G7 nations and EU.

Mr. Saied's proposed talks will include four groups which, together as the "National Dialogue Quartet", jointly won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2015 for its work in building what was, at the time, the only democracy that emerged from the 2011 Arab Spring.

The four groups are the Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT), the Tunisian Confederation of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts (UTICA), the Tunisian Human Rights League and the Tunisian Order of Lawyers.

On Sunday, UGTT leader Noureddine Taboubi appealed to Mr. Saied to launch the national dialogue.

However, Mr. Saied ruled out participation of those "who sabotaged, starved and mistreated the people", suggesting it would not include parties and civil society organisations which have denounced his seizure of power.

Eight killed in Philippines housing fire

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MANILA

Eight people died, including six children, when a fire ripped through a poor community in the Philippines capital of Manila on Monday and destroyed 80 houses, a fire official said.

Another three people were injured in the blaze which started around 5 a.m. on the second floor of a house in a crowded, informal settlement inside the campus of the University of the Philippines.

It took nearly two hours to extinguish the inferno, Senior Fire Officer Greg Bichayda said. The victims were trapped inside their homes as "the fire spread quickly", he said.

More than 13 million people live in the densely populated capital, with tens of thousands in overcrowded slums where fires are common. Many of the residents have fled rural poverty to live in Manila where there are more jobs.

ida
इन्दौर विकास प्राधिकरण
INDORE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Shivraj Singh Chouhan
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Madhya Pradesh

No.: IDA/ETENDER/2022-23/51/116 Date: 02/05/2022

TENDER ID 2022_DTCP_200579_1 (1st Call)

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Online tenders are invited on Percentage of project cost basis from the Consulting Organization / Firm / Individual qualifying the eligibility criteria as per tender document. Tender documents can be purchased from Website https://www.mptenders.gov.in. Help manual can be seen on the portal of e-procurement system.

S. No.	NAME OF WORK	Estimated cost of Project (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Cost of Tender form + GST(Rs.)	Time allowed for completion including rainy season	Eligibility Criteria	Last date & Time of Purchase and Submit Tender	Remarks
01	RFP For Selection of an Architectural Consultant for designing of Master Plan for Mixed land use Development with Planning and Designing of First Phase Building in proposed Startup Park at Super Corridor Indore	450.00 Crores	900000/-	23600/-	36 Months including Rainy Seasons	As Specified in RFP documents	26/05/2022 upto 17:30 Hrs	GST shall be paid separately as per applicable rates. So Tender Rates should be quoted accordingly

Note:-
1. The Firms should have registration with Employees Provident Fund, GST and PAN. Copy of registration is to be submitted along with tender document. In case if the firm is not having registration then an application for the registration will be also considered.
2. All details relating to the Bid Document(s) can be viewed and downloaded free of cost on the website.
3. Tender Document can be purchased after making online payment of portal fees through Credit/ Debit / Cash Card/ internet banking.
4. Amendments to NIT, if any, would be published on website only, and not in newspaper.
5. Any type of exemption in Tender Form Fees/EMD will not be allowed and Tender without Tender form Fees /EMD shall be rejected prima-facie.
6. If you have any Technical query regarding this tender please write to A.K. Khare (Mob. 9406621090) on idaindore7@yahoo.in. For query regarding online submission of this tender call Shri Mukesh Jadhav on 9301340967.

(A.K. Khare) Chief City Planner
Indore Development Authority
Mob: 9406621090

THE HINDU GROUP

ENGLISH LEARNING IS NOW CHILD'S PLAY

STEP presents a fun-filled learning course for kids from classes 4 to 7.

STEP Live Junior has interactive exercises, tests, polls, quizzes and a lot more to hold your child's attention and help them confidently communicate in English.

Special summer batch starts on 16th May, on all weekdays.

Focus on grammar & vocabulary
Syllabus that is never taught in school
Fun-filled 1-hour class per day
Entertaining exercises and tests
Child-friendly context

Scan the QR code
Timing:
11:00 am to 12:00 noon
To know more,
visit BIT.LY/SJUNIOR

STEP LIVE Junior
GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY

MARKET WATCH

	02-05-2022	% CHANGE
Sensex	56,976	-0.15
US Dollar	76.48	0.03
Gold	50,936	-1.34
Brent oil	107.34	----

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	856.55	0.15
Apollo Hosp	4304.75	-149.60
Asian Paints	3200.00	-37.10
Axis Bank	727.35	-1.35
Bajaj Auto	3623.45	-106.10
Bajaj Finserv	14857.45	46.30
Bajaj Finance	6626.15	-45.65
Bharti Airtel	741.35	2.35
BPCL	366.45	3.85
Britannia Ind	3271.30	-7.95
Cipla	976.60	-4.60
Coal India	187.65	4.80
Divis Lab	4509.65	4.25
Dr Reddys Lab	4123.90	-8.05
Eicher Motors	2552.50	-77.85
Grasim Ind	1679.55	-12.75
HCL Tech	1066.90	-12.35
HDFC	2264.00	34.30
HDFC Bank	1403.70	19.10
HDFC Life	579.85	-2.55
Hero MotoCorp	2487.30	-19.35
Hindalco	484.40	1.75
Hind Unilever	2230.50	-4.35
ICICI Bank	741.00	-2.30
Indusind Bank	1018.10	39.55
Infosys	1541.00	-26.55
ITC	263.15	3.60
JSW Steel	731.95	4.80
Kotak Bank	1774.35	-16.40
L&T	1679.45	-14.90
M&M	921.35	-0.75
Maruti Suzuki	7634.75	-83.05
Nestle India Ltd.	18440.55	110.25
NTPC	157.50	1.30
ONGC	156.35	-4.10
PowerGrid Corp	231.55	3.80
Reliance Ind	2780.45	-9.80
SBI Life	1081.05	-24.45
State Bank	491.00	-5.30
Shree Cement	26230.20	108.70
Sun Pharma	923.40	-5.25
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	824.40	0.65
Tata Motors	432.85	-4.75
Tata Steel	1295.20	24.15
TCS	3542.40	-4.30
Tech Mahindra	1231.20	-27.80
Titan	2386.55	-71.65
UltraTech Cement	6679.00	48.75
UPL	830.25	7.35
Wipro	495.00	-13.80

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on May 02

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	76.32	76.64
Euro	80.29	80.66
British Pound	95.90	96.31
Japanese Yen (100)	58.71	58.96
Chinese Yuan	11.55	11.60
Swiss Franc	78.39	78.73
Singapore Dollar	55.07	55.31
Canadian Dollar	59.26	59.54
Malaysian Ringitt	17.52	17.61
Australian Dollar	53.93	54.20

Source:Indian Bank

HDFC Q4 net rises 16% as home loan demand improves

Mortgage loan disbursements jumped 37% in FY22

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Housing Development Finance Corporation Ltd. (HDFC) on Monday reported fourth-quarter standalone net profit rose 16% to ₹3,700 crore, from ₹3,180 crore in the year-earlier period, as demand for home loans improved.

Work in progress: The pipeline of loan applications continues to remain strong, says HDFC. •KARUNAKARAN M

'Sales momentum rising'

For the 12 months ended March 31, 2022, the mortgage lender reported net profit of ₹13,742 crore, a 14.3% increase from ₹12,027 crore. Individual approvals and disbursements grew 38% and 37%, respectively, in the fiscal year, HDFC said.

"Growth in home loans was seen in both, the affordable housing segment as well as in high-end properties," the lender said in a statement. "The increasing sales momentum and new project launches augurs well for the housing sector," the company added.

During the year, 29% of home loans approved in volume terms and 13% in value terms had been to customers from the Economically Weaker Section (EWS) and Low Income Group (LIG). The average home loan to the EWS and LIG segments stood at ₹11.2 lakh and ₹19.7 lakh, respectively, it said.

'₹30 dividend'

The board recommended a dividend of ₹30 per equity share of face value of ₹2 each for the year ended March 31, compared with ₹23 in the previous year. The dividend pay-out ratio is 40%, HDFC said in a filing.

"The demand for home loans and pipeline of loan applications continues to remain strong," it said.

Assets under management stood at ₹6,53,902 crore as at March 31, 2022, as against ₹5,69,894 crore in the previous year.

Tata Steel to stop Russia coal imports on supply uncertainty

'Supplies from U.S., other markets to make up for shortfall'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Tata Steel Ltd., one of the major importers of Russian coal in recent months, has decided to stop procurement from the country citing 'uncertainties' over supplies following international sanctions imposed on it after Ukraine invasion.

"To ensure business continuity, we have sourced alternative supplies of raw materials, as transactions with Russian suppliers and bankers at present come with a lot of uncertainties as a result of international sanctions imposed on Russia," a Tata Steel spokesperson said in a statement.

Though companies from India were still procuring crude oil and coal at discounted prices from Russia to meet their requirements, payments to Russian suppliers through the prevailing banking channels remained a concern owing to the economic sanctions.

Even though there has been no ban on coal imports from Russia, Tata Steel is believed to have taken the decision to sustain its operations through reliable supplies from overseas at a time when shortage of coal is threatening to disrupt energy generation in India.

'Diversified supplies'

"We believe that impact will not be there as the company has a very diversified procurement mechanism with supplies coming from Mozambique to Australia," Kamlesh Bagmar, deputy head of research at Prabhudas Lilladher said.

"Increased supplies from U.S. and other markets are likely to make up for the shortfall, if any."

Tata Steel shares gained 1.84% to ₹1,295.10 apieceon the BSE on Monday when the Sensex slid 0.15%.

'Loans for affordable housing to grow 17-20%'

ICRA flags need to watch asset quality

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The loan book for affordable housing finance companies (AHFCs) is expected to grow by 17-20% in FY2023, rating agency ICRA said in a report. But, it also warned that asset quality needed to be monitored.

It said loan book growth would be driven by factors such as 'the largely underpenetrated market, favourable demographic profile, government thrust on housing and a favourable regulatory and tax regime that supported the growth outlook'.

As on December 31, 2021, the total loan book of AHFCs stood at ₹66,221 crore and constituted about 6% of the overall HFC loan book.

"After witnessing moderation in loan book growth in Q1, growth for AHFCs picked up again in Q2 and Q3, with disbursements for AHFCs reaching 85-90% of the peak levels seen in Q4," said Manushree Saggar, VP, Financial Sector Ratings, ICRA. AHFCs reported 14% year-on-year growth.

Coal India's supply to power sector rose 16% in April

Company plans to augment dispatches further

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Coal India Ltd. (CIL) on Monday said coal supply to the power sector rose 15.6% to 49.7 million tonnes last month in the wake of high demand for the dry fuel from electricity generating plants. It stressed that it was planning to augment its dispatches further, especially to power plants in the coming months.

The statement comes at a time when several parts of the country are grappling with a power crisis.

"With the intense demand for coal continuing unabated driven by an upward spiral in electricity generation, CIL pushed up its supplies to power plants of the country to 49.7 million tonnes (MT) in April 2022. This is 6.7 MT more supply compared to April 2021," the company said.

With higher output, CIL is aiming to increase its dispatches further, especially to power plants, in the coming months. Coal India, which accounts for more than 80% of domestic coal output, is one of the major suppliers of the fossil fuel to the power sector.

On an average, the PSU supplied 1.66 MT of coal per day to power utilities in April which increased to 1.73 MT during last week. Average supply per day is at par with what was programmed by CIL for this sector during the first quarter of FY23.

Coal production also rose 27.6% to 53.5 MT last month from a year earlier.

Power use rises 13.6% to 132.98 bn units in April

Early summer, pickup in economy cited

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Power consumption in the country grew 13.6% year-on-year to 132.98 billion units (BU) in April, showing the impact of the early onset of summers and spurt in economic activities, according to Power Ministry data.

Power consumption in April last year was recorded at 117.08 BU, which was higher than 84.55 BU in the same month of 2020.

On the other hand, the peak power demand met, which is the highest supply in a day, during April this year remained at an all-time high of 207.11 GW. The peak power supply stood at 182.37 GW in April 2021 and 132.73 GW in April 2020.

Experts are of the view that power consumption and demand rose unprecedentedly mainly because of the early onset of summers and showed that greater economic activities are pushing commercial and industrial requirements of electricity in the country.

IN BRIEF

TVS Motor unveils new NTorq 125 XT scooter

CHENNAI

TVS Motor Company has unveiled a new variant of its sporty 125cc scooter TVS NTorq 125 XT, with updated features, priced at ₹1,02,823 (ex-showroom New Delhi). This variant is coupled with SmartXonnect connectivity platform, TVS Motor said.

BoB cuts interest rate on car loans to 7%

MUMBAI

State-run Bank of Baroda (BoB) announced a 25 basis points (bps) reduction in its car loan interest rates to 7% per annum from 7.25% earlier. The lender also said it has reduced processing charges to a flat ₹1,500-plus GST for a limited period up to June 30, 2022. PTI

LIC IPO anchor investor quota oversubscribed

REUTERS
MUMBAI

The IPO of India's biggest insurer, Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), has got off to a good start, with the $732 million of shares reserved for so-called anchor investors oversubscribed at the upper end of the price range, a banking source said.

The government has said it expects to raise up to $2.74 billion, just a third of its original target, from selling a 3.5% stake in LIC in the country's biggest initial public offering (IPO).

Anchor investors are institutional investors that are allotted shares before the subscription opens for retail and other investors

NMDC output, sales increase 1% in April

Firm eyeing 50 MT, says CMD Deb

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

India's largest iron-ore producer NMDC reported 3.15 million tonnes (MT) of production and 3.12 MT sales in April, recording an almost 1% increase each, compared with the year-earlier period.

Iron ore production in April 2022 was 0.6% more that the output in the year earlier, while sales were 0.9% higher. It continues to register growth in its performance, NMDC said.

This was the highest production in April in NMDC's history. It came in the backdrop of the the firm producing over 42 MT in 2021-22.

"FY23 has started on the right note for us and is a reflection of the team's hard work aligned with the company's strategic posture," CMD Sumit Deb said.

"Our adoption of new technology and digital initiatives is strengthening our supply chain and making NMDC future ready."

"We are confident that NMDC will grow to become a 50 MT mining company in the near future," he added .

CG Power sales double to ₹5,159 crore

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Murugappa Group firm CG Power and Industrial Solutions Ltd. said it has achieved financial turnaround in its first full year of operations ended March.

For FY22, the company has posted an almost 9% dip in its standalone net profit to ₹627 crore, while sales more than doubled to ₹5,159 crore. Free cash flow generated was ₹392 crore.

For the fourth quarter, net profit slumped to ₹109 crore from ₹849 crore. Total sales rose to ₹1,407 crore from ₹1,022 crore. Free cash flow generated was ₹86 crore. Term debt of ₹235 crore was prepaid out of internal accruals.

'Vedanta dividend boosts parent's refinancing effort'

VRL to receive $1.02 bn from India unit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A large dividend from its cash-rich India operating subsidiary has boosted billionaire Anil Agarwal-led Vedanta Resources Ltd.'s efforts to refinance debt, Moody's Investors Service said on Monday.

On April 28, mining company Vedanta Ltd. announced that its board of directors approved an interim dividend of ₹11,710 crore ($1.56 billion) of which $1.02 billion would be received by its holding company Vedanta Resources Limited (VRL).

VRL owns 69.7% of Vedanta Ltd. "The large cash dividend is credit positive for VRL because it staves off some of the liquidity and refinancing risk tied to the holding company's debt maturities in the first half of the fiscal year ending March 31, 2023 (fiscal 2023)," Moody's said in an issuer comment.

At the same time, VRL has launched a tender offer to purchase for cash up to $500 million of its $1 billion senior unsecured notes maturing in July 2022.

Unemployment in April climbs to 7.83%: CMIE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

The unemployment rate in the country climbed to 7.83% in April from 7.6% in March, according to data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE).

The unemployment rate in urban areas was higher at 9.22% compared with 8.28% in March, the data released on Monday showed. In rural areas, the rate was 7.18% in April compared with 7.29% in the previous month.

Unemployment was the highest in Haryana at 34.5%, followed by Rajasthan at 28.8%, Bihar 21.1% and Jammu and Kashmir at 15.6%, the data showed.

SPORT

Priya outclasses Dutee in women's 200m

Jain varsity athlete completes a double, having won the 400m on Sunday

KHELO VARSITIES

SPORTS REPORTER
BENGALURU

Priya Mohan outclassed Dutee Chand to clinch the women's 200m event in the Khelo India University Games here on Sunday. Jain University's Priya (23.9s) turned on the jets at the bend to comfortably defeat the more experienced Dutee (24.02s)

Strong finish: Priya, centre, comfortably defeated Dutee to the gold. •K. MURALI KUMAR

Priya completed the double at the championship, having secured the 400m gold on a rain-drenched track on Sunday night. "The turnaround time after the 100m last night was quite less. My recovery was not ideal, so my timing in the 200m was not very good," Priya stated.

"My race strategy was to stay with her (Dutee) in the first 80m. I have the stronger finish, which worked in my favour," Priya added.

The results:

Athletics: Winners: Men: 200m: A. Vignesh (Mangalore) 21.28s (New KIUG Record) (Old: 21.42s, Rahul Kumar, 2020); **800m:** Satya Dev (Maharshi Dayanand) 1:54.26s; **5000m:** Lokesh Choudhary (Maharshi Dayanand) 14:36.11s; **Triple jump:** Krishna Singh (Mumbai) 16.10m (New KIUG Record) (Old: 15.27m, A.B. Arun, 2020); **High jump:** Deva Karthick (Madras) 2.08m; **Pole vault:** Dhirendra Kumar (Veer Bahadur Singh Purvanchal) 4.80m (New KIUG Record) (Old: 4.60m, Manish Singh, 2020); **Hammer throw:** Damneet Singh (Punjabi) 64.32m (New KIUG Record) (Old: 61.25m, Damneet Singh, 2020); **4x400m:** Mangalore (Mahantesh Helavi, M.C. Milan, T.H. Devaiah, W. Nihal) 3:13.44s (New KIUG Record) (Old: 3:15.45s, MG University, 2020)

Women: 200m: Priya Mohan (Jain) 23.90s; **800m:** Pooja (Lovely Professional) 2:07.67s; **5000m:** Nikita Raut (Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur) 16:55.38s (New KIUG Record) (Old: 16:59.44s, Jyoti, 2020); **20km race walk:** Rakhi Singh (Professor Rajendra Singh) 1:41:35.00s; **High jump:** Gracena Merly (Manonmaniam Sundaran) 1.76m; **Triple jump:** Meera Shibu (Calicut) 12.72m; **Hammer Throw:** Surabh Vedpathak (Lovely Professional) 54.40m (New KIUG Record) (Old: 51.80m, Varsha, 2020); **Heptathlon:** Tanu (Guru Jambeshwar) 4805 pts.

4x400m: Punjabi (Simranjeet Kaur, Tanveer, Kiranjot Kaur, Simran Kaur) 3:43.83s (New KIUG Record) (Old: 3:48.12s, MG University, 2020).

Table tennis: Team final: Men: Mumbai bt SRM 3-0.

Women: SRM bt Adamas 3-0.

Football: Women: Final: Vidyasagar 2 (Singo Murmu 48, Mugli Saren 73-p) bt Guru Nanak Dev University 0.

Tennis: Men: Final: Anna bt SRM 2-1 .

Gukesh stays in joint lead

CHESS

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

Fourth seed D. Gukesh (3 points) continued his winning run at the expense of Jimenez Jose Fernando Cuena in 46 moves and stayed in the lead with two other Spaniards Latasa Jaime Santos and Ruiz Miguel Santos after three rounds of the Chessables Sunway International chess tournament at Punta Prima, Spain, on Sunday.

Gukesh now plays top seed Latasa Jaime Santos who received a walkover.

Second seed K. Sasikiran raised his tally to 2.5 points after beating Belgium's Daria Vanduyfhuys in 35 moves.

Soham Das (1.5) scored his first victory after facing local rival Luis Alberto Munoz Suarez.

Harshada crowned Jr. World champion

WRESTLING

Y.B. SARANGI

Harshada Garud became the first Indian to win a gold medal in the World junior weightlifting championships at Heraklion, Greece, on Monday.

Harshada rode on her snatch performance (70kg) to lift a total of 153kg and beat her nearest rival Turkey's Bektas Cansu by three kg in the women's 45kg weight class.

Moldova's Hincu Teodora-Luminita (149kg) took the third spot.

The 18-year-old Pune girl, who had earlier won the Khelo India Youth Games crown and the Asian championships bronze medal with an identical total of 139kg in 2020, did 64kg, 67kg and 70kg in snatch to push Spain's Marta Garcia (68kg) to the second place.

Harshada also lifted successfully in all her three clean and jerk attempts to record 83kg, two kg less than Bektas (who had registered 65kg in snatch), to claim the second place.

Harshada... proud moment. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

However, she still managed to clinch a historic gold.

Another Indian in fray, Anjali Patel (snatch 67kg, clean and jerk 81kg) tied with Indonesian Najla Khoirunnisa on an aggregate of 148kg and ended up at the fifth place.

Both of them were one kg away from the third-placed Hincu.

Before this, Mirabai Chanu (women's 48kg, bronze, 2013, Lima), Jhilli Dalabehera (women's 48kg, bronze, 2018, Tashkent) and Achinta Sheuli (men's 73kg, silver, 2021, Tashkent) achieved podium finishes in the event.

"I was not well till December. My improvement happened after I joined the National camp. All credit to the coaches, the Indian Weightlifting Federation, the other support staff and my family for their support," said Harshada.

TV PICKS

NBA: Sports 18, Vh1, Voot Select, MTV & Jio TV, 7 a.m.
IPL 2022: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 7.30 p.m.
Champions League: Sony Ten 2 & 3 (SD & HD) & Sony LIV, 12.30 a.m. (Wednesday)

Knight Riders cruise past Royals, snap five-match losing streak

Spinners Anukul and Narine restrict the Rajasthan side to 152 before Shreyas, Rana and Rinku power the chase; Samson top scores for RR

IPL 2022

SANTADEEP DEY
MUMBAI

The Kolkata Knight Riders spinners proved too wily for the Rajasthan Royals batters, helping the side set up a seven-wicket win during their return leg fixture at the Wankhede Stadium on Monday.

All-rounder Anukul Roy shone with the ball in his very first outing in purple-and-gold, finishing with figures of 4-0-28-1 as KKR finally got its campaign back on track after five straight losses.

Sunil Narine was impressive as usual – albeit not on the field – conceding just 19.

After Shreyas Iyer's men chose to bowl, Umesh Yadav provided the breakthrough with a blinder off his own bowling to send Devdutt Padikkal back to the dugout.

Jos Buttler struggled against Narine. Along with skipper Sanju Samson (54, 49b, 7x4, 1x6), the English opener only managed to take Royals to 38 in the PowerPlay.

Snaring the big fish

Tim Southee snared the big fish in the ninth over. Buttler, looking to break the shackles, flat-batted to a leaping Shivam Mavi at long-on.

Karun Nair then fell to Anukul, who smartly dragged back his length. Riyan Parag also took the long walk back shortly after.

Samson, meanwhile, huffed and puffed to a fifty before skying a full-length delivery to deep midwicket.

Stars of the night: Anukul kept the Royals batters on a leash before Rinku struck a few meaty blows to take the Knight Riders home. • SPORTZPICS/IPL

Shimron Hetmyer (27, 13b, 1x4, 2x6) breathed some much-needed life into the innings as 30 runs were scored in the last two overs.

Chasing 153, Knight Riders openers Aaron Finch and B. Indrajith didn't survive long.

Finch dragged Kuldeep Sen's back-of-a-length delivery onto the stumps, while Indrajith miscued one to R. Ashwin at fine leg. Knight Riders soon found themselves in a familiar situation at 32 for two in six overs.

The spin duo

Royals had in their ranks two of the three bowlers who have taken the most wickets against Knight Riders – Ashwin and Yuzvendra Chahal.

The duo tried to check the flow of runs further. But Shreyas (34, 32b, 3x4, 1x6) and Nitish Rana (48 n.o., 37b, 3x4, 2x6) kept the scoreboard ticking.

Rana, who hasn't been dismissed by Ashwin in the IPL, took on the off-spinner in the 11th over, clobbering him for two fours and a six.

The 60-run partnership off 43 balls came to an end when Samson confidently went for a referral after a wide call.

UltraEdge's call

Although it seemed Shreyas had played and missed, UltraEdge suggested otherwise.

Rinku Singh (42, 23b, 6x4, 1x6), who walked in at 92 for three in 12.5 overs, was in fine touch.

With support from Rana – his contribution to the 66-run stand was only 17 – the target never looked big enough.

SCOREBOARD

RAJASTHAN ROYALS

Jos Buttler c Mavi b Southee 22 *(25b, 3x4)*, Devdutt Padikkal c & b Umesh 2 *(5b)*, Sanju Samson c Rinku b Mavi 54 *(49b, 7x4, 1x6)*, Karun Nair c Rinku b Anukul 13 *(13b, 1x4)*, Riyan Parag c Anukul b Southee 19 *(12b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Shimron Hetmyer (not out) 27 *(13b, 1x4, 2x6)*, R. Ashwin (not out) 6 *(5b)*; Extras (lb-2, w-5, nb-2): 9; Total (for five wkts. in 20 overs): 152.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-7 (Padikkal, 2.1 overs), 2-55 (Buttler, 8.3), 3-90 (Karun, 13.1), 4-115 (Parag, 16.6), 5-115 (Samson, 17.1).

KNIGHT RIDERS BOWLING

Umesh 4-1-24-1, Anukul 4-0-28-1, Narine 4-0-19-0, Mavi 4-0-33-1, Southee 4-0-46-2.

KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS

B. Indrajith c R. Ashwin b Prasidh 15 *(16b, 2x4)*, Aaron Finch b Kuldeep Sen 4 *(7b)*, Shreyas Iyer c Samson b Boult 34 *(32b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Nitish Rana (not out) 48 *(37b, 3x4, 2x6)*, Rinku Singh (not out) 42 *(23b, 6x4, 1x6)*; Extras (lb-4, w-11): 15; Total (for three wkts. in 19.1 overs): 158.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-16 (Finch, 3.1), 2-32 (Indrajith, 5.4), 3-92 (Shreyas, 12.5).

ROYALS BOWLING

Boult 4-0-25-1, Prasidh 4-0-37-1, Kuldeep Sen 3.1-0-28-1, R. Ashwin 4-0-33-0, Chahal 4-0-31-0.

Toss: KKR.

KKR won by seven wickets with five balls to spare.

Innings scan

RR		KKR
50	Dots	42
13	Fours	14
5	Sixes	4
38/1	PP	32/2
7.60	RR	8.24

Next assignment

RR: May 7 vs. **PBKS**
Wankhede, 3.30 p.m.

KKR: May 7 vs. **LSG**
MCA Stadium, 7.30 p.m.

POINTS TABLE

Teams	M	W	L	Pts	NRR
Gujarat Titans	9	8	1	16	0.377
Lucknow Super Giants	10	7	3	14	0.397
Rajasthan Royals	10	6	4	12	0.340
Sunrisers Hyderabad	9	5	4	10	0.471
Royal Challengers Bangalore	10	5	5	10	-0.558
Delhi Capitals	9	4	5	8	0.587
Kolkata Knight Riders	10	4	6	8	0.060
Punjab Kings	9	4	5	8	-0.470
Chennai Super Kings	9	3	6	6	-0.407
Mumbai Indians	9	1	8	2	-0.836

After the KKR-RR match on May 2

On-a-roll Titans meet inconsistent Kings

Gujarat has fired in all departments, Punjab must regroup

Saha. • SPORTZPICS/IPL

SHAYAN ACHARYA
NAVI MUMBAI

The last time Gujarat Titans faced Punjab Kings in an Indian Premier League fixture, Rahul Tewatia hit two sixes off the last two deliveries to seal the deal for the new entrant.

And when the two teams meet at the D.Y. Patil Stadium on Tuesday, Gujarat Titans, which has won eight out of nine games, will once again be pinning its hopes on Tewatia.

Match-winner

After being roped in by Titans for a whopping ₹9 crore in the auction, the all-rounder from Haryana has justified his price tag, emerging as one of the match-winners for the franchise.

TODAY'S MATCH

GT vs. PBKS

DY PATIL, 7.30 P.M.

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: 1
GT 1 | PBKS 0

PREVIOUS MEETING
GT won by six wickets, 2022

STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD)

Titans have fired in every department, under the watchful eyes of captain Hardik Pandya. While Wriddhiman Saha and Shubman Gill have made their presence felt as openers, the middle-order has been looked after well by captain Hardik, David Miller and Rashid Khan. Coming into the tournament after a long break, Hardik has so far amassed 308 runs in the tournament and has led the side from the front.

Punjab Kings, on the other hand, has been inconsistent with five defeats in nine outings and it needs to regroup in a bid to stay in contention for the playoffs spot.

Even though captain Mayank Agarwal, batters Shikhar Dhawan, Jonny Bairstow and Liam Livingstone have done well in patches, consistency has been an area of concern.

While pacer Arshdeep Singh has impressed, seasoned campaigners Kagiso Rabada and Rahul Chahar need to shoulder more responsibility.

Mohsin has made the most of his opportunities

LSG speedster possesses shrewd cricketing acumen

SANTADEEP DEY
MUMBAI

Mohsin Khan is not a one-trick pony. Although classified as a medium-pacer, the 23-year-old from Sambhal in Uttar Pradesh can crank it up to the high 140s. Just the other night, the delivery which saw the back of the dangerous Rishabh Pant was clocked at 145kmph.

Even Lucknow Super Giants skipper K.L. Rahul confessed that he doesn't enjoy facing Mohsin during the training sessions. "He's been brilliant. I played him in the nets for the first time a month ago... Didn't want to face him. He was sharp and scary at times," he said during the presentation ceremony after the team's six-run win over the Delhi Capitals on Sunday.

Rahul would also tell you that it is not always the sheer pace, the variations, or the left-armer's angle which aids Mohsin. It also involves shrewd cricketing acumen.

From setting Pant up with a barrage of short balls before pushing the fuller length to do him in, to flummoxing an unsuspecting Liam Livingstone of Punjab Kings with a slower ball, Mohsin has been ticking all the right boxes.

After warming the bench for three seasons with Mumbai Indians, he has now made the most of his opportunities at his new home. Mohsin, who played his only First Class match in 2020 and made his List-A and T20 debuts in 2018, has picked up eight wickets from four matches in the ongoing edition of the IPL. His economy rate is a miserly 6.07, with his strike rate and bowling average being 10.50 and 10.63 respectively.

Handy batter

He has shown he can be handy with the bat as well, scoring an unbeaten six-ball 13 against Kings. While he got off the mark with a 91m six, he also played a drive through cover off the last ball of the innings to take his side past 150 (153/8).

Mohsin seemed chuffed when he stepped onto the dais to receive his very first IPL Player-of-the-Match award for his four-wicket haul against Capitals. "I am so happy today. My mom and dad would be seeing this on TV," he said.

Mohsin Khan. • SPORTZPICS/IPL

Pujara is up and running again

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Regular match practice, something Cheteshwar Pujara was not able to do due to the COVID-19 pandemic, is the reason for the India batter's consistent run in the ongoing County Championship, reckons his father and coach Arvind Pujara.

Pujara, a veteran of 95 Tests, found himself out of the Indian team along with Ajinkya Rahane after the series loss in South Africa.

The consistency that has made him play close to 100 Tests was not there over the past three seasons when he averaged less than 30, forcing the selectors to look beyond him for the home series against Sri Lanka.

But, with two double centuries and a hundred in three games for Sussex this season, Pujara is doing what is in his control as he looks to make a comeback for the one-off Test in England in July.

"I feel the lack of game time was the big reason why he could not be consistent over the past three seasons," said Arvind, who remains Pujara's only personal coach till date.

Kerala shoots out Bengal

Clinches the title with a 5-4 win on penalties

In seventh heaven: Kerala had the last laugh in the final against Bengal. • SAKEER HUSSAIN

SANTOSH TROPHY

P.K. AJITH KUMAR
MANJERI

Nearly 27,000 people filled up the Malappuram District Sports Complex Stadium long before the kick-off of the final of the Santosh Trophy National football championship on Monday night. The team they came to cheer for, Kerala, made it a memorable night for them.

Kerala lifted the title for the seventh time, beating Bengal 5-4 in the penalty shootout. After regulation time failed to produce a goal, the teams were tied 1-1 after extra-time.

It was a case of history repeating itself: Kerala's last triumph had also came after a shootout against Bengal, four years ago at Kolkata.

On this night, though, Bengal was just four minutes away from winning its 32nd title. It was leading by the 97th-minute goal scored by Dilip Orawn, but Muhammed Safnad equalised for Kerala.

That goal was greeted by one of the loudest cheers you could imagine on a sporting field. That noise showed how much football means to this part of the world.

Safnad's equalising header came off P.N. Noufal's cross from the right. Bengal's goal had also come through a header – Supriya Pandit provided the cross – after a defensive lapse from Kerala.

Earlier, in normal time, both sides had plenty of chances to score as they played some exciting end-to-end football.

In the shootout, Bengal had to pay dearly for Sajal Bag's miss off the second attempt. All the other penalties went in.

When the last of those kicks, taken by Kerala's M. Faslurahman, kissed the right top corner, the stadium erupted once again.

The result: Bengal 1 (Dilip Orawn 97) drew with Kerala 1 (Muhammed Safnad 116). Kerala won 5-4 in shootout.

20-member team for Olympiad

Anand steps aside to let youngsters have a chance

CHESS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

A 20-member team will represent India in the Chess Olympiad to be held at Mamallapuram, near here, from July 28 to August 10.

As is the norm, the team selection was based on the average rating of the player in the last three rating lists released by World Chess Organisation (FIDE).

Vidit Gujrathi, P. Harikrishna, Arjun Erigaisi, S. L. Narayanan and K. Sasikiran will form the first team while Nihal Sarin, D. Gukesh, B. Adhiban, R. Praggnanandhaa and Raunak Sadhwani will represent India as the second team.

India, as the host, is entitled to field two teams while the other 160-odd countries participating will field one team each.

In the women's section, Koneru Humpy, D. Harika, R. Vaishali, Tania Sachdev and Bhakti Kulkarni comprise the main team while the second team will be represented by Vantika Agrawal, Soumya Swaminathan, Mary Ann Gomes, Padmini Rout and Divya Deshmukh.

Five-time World champion Viswanathan Anand, the highest-rated Indian, has decided against playing in the Olympiad but will be in action as the Chief Mentor. "After playing many Olympiads, I thought it was time for the younger ones to play," said Anand.

Extra special: Praggnanandhaa and Vaishali will be the second set of siblings to represent India at the same Olympiad. • FILE PHOTO: H. VIBHU

All India Chess Federation secretary Bharat Singh Chauhan said the Indian team is a good mix of youth and experience. "Opportunity to field two teams at the Olympiad opens the door for many young Indian talents to showcase their game on the biggest stage which otherwise would have been possible only after a wait of probably another couple of years," he said.

"It's a huge opportunity for them so early in their careers. Teams look strong and have a good mix of experience as well as young talents and I'm confident that they will make the most of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," he added.

The teams: Men: A Team: Vidit Gujrathi, P. Harikrishna, Arjun Erigaisi, S.L. Narayanan, K. Sasikiran.

B Team: Nihal Sarin, D. Gukesh, B. Adhiban, R. Praggananandha, Raunak Sadhwani.

Women: A: Koneru Humpy, D. Harika, R. Vaishali, Tania Sachdev, Bhakti Kulkarni.

B: Vantika Agarwal, Soumya Swaminathan, Mary Ann Gomes, Padmini Rout, Divya Deshmukh.

USA team is breathtaking: Anand

Viswanathan Anand. • B. VELANKANNI RAJ

K. KEERTHIVASAN
CHENNAI

Five-time World champion Viswanathan Anand said that USA will be the favourite to win the Chess Olympiad to be held in the city in July-August.

"The USA team is breathtaking," Anand told *The Hindu* here on Monday on the sidelines of the Krish Chitale awards and RCM-doodleblue chess scholarships 2022. "They have the world's top players in Levon Aronian, So Wesley, Fabiano Caruana, Hikaru Nakamura and Leinier Perez Dominguez. They are the runaway favourites on paper."

On the Indian teams' chances at the Olympiad, Anand felt both squads were very strong.

Villarreal has its task cut out

Will Emery engineer another big result, this time against Liverpool?

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

ASSOCIATED PRESS
PARIS

The Champions League is heading toward a third all-English final in four seasons unless Spanish rivals can overturn first-leg losses.

Villarreal surpassed expectations to reach the final four after upsetting former champions Juventus and Bayern Munich, and Liverpool was unable to inflict a knockout blow at Anfield.

Still, Unai Emery, a master of strategy in knockout competitions, faces the enormous challenge of engineering a comeback over a Liverpool side that is seeking a historic quadruple of the Champions League, Premier League, FA Cup and League Cup titles.

Villarreal will rely on an attack that shares with Real Madrid the highest number of goals scored at home in the Spanish league this season (38).

Hard at work: Villarreal players at a training session on Monday. • AFP

Home advantage

At its Estadio de la Ceramica, Villarreal also beat Bayern Munich 1-0 in the quarterfinals and had to settle for a 1-1 draw with Juventus despite outplaying the Italian side.

Emery is hoping that Gerard Moreno can play after he missed the first match with a leg injury, but the Spain striker remains doubtful. Emery rested several starters, including forward Arnaut Danjuma, during Saturday's 2-1 loss to Alavés that left Villarreal seventh in the Spanish league.

For the team from a small town near Spain's eastern coast, winning the Champions League is the only way back into the competition next season.

Changed side

Liverpool made five changes from the side that beat Villarreal when it played at Newcastle on Saturday despite being involved in a Premier League title race. The second-place team managed to secure the 1-0 win that kept it a point behind Manchester City, all while star striker Mohamed Salah was only needed on the field for 25 minutes.

Fabinho and Thiago Alcantara also only came on in the second half while Ibrahima Konate and Trent Alexander-Arnold didn't come off the bench at all as the depth of the squad was clear.

Today's fixture: Villarreal vs Liverpool, 12.30 a.m. (Wednesday).

Barcelona reclaims second spot

Sees off the challenge from relegation-battling Mallorca

LA LIGA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MADRID

Barcelona took a big step towards securing a place in next season's Champions League as a 2-1 victory over Real Mallorca on Sunday saw it reclaim second spot in La Liga from Sevilla.

Goals in either half from Memphis Depay and Sergio Busquets put Xavi Hernandez's men in control and it took the three points despite Antonio Raillo's effort for their relegation-threatened opponents at the Camp Nou.

The Catalan giant move two points ahead of Sevilla and nine clear of fifth-placed Real Betis, which has a game in hand, with four matches to play this season.

Barca took the lead in the 25th minute as Memphis Depay made a clever run to collect Jordi Alba's pass before thumping a fine half-volley into the bottom corner.

On target: Depay scores Barcelona's opener past Mallorca defender Maffeo. • AFP

The Dutchman has scored 11 league goals since joining Barcelona from Lyon last summer, despite having struggled for a regular starting spot since the arrival of Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang from Arsenal in January.

Earlier, Real Sociedad suffered a blow in its bid to qualify for next season's Champions League, as Radamel Falcao grabbed Rayo Vallecano a 1-1 draw.

The results:

Granada 1 (L. Milla 90+2) drew with Celta Vigo 1 (Puertas 72-og); Rayo Vallecano 1 (Falcao 78) drew with Real Sociedad 1 (Sorloth 33).

Barcelona 2 (Depay 25, Busquets 54) bt Mallorca 1 (Raillo 79).

Junior WC heartbreak behind us: Bichu Devi

Players eager to learn from the senior side, says the goalkeeper

HOCKEY

ANI
BENGALURU

Indian junior women's goalkeeper Bichu Devi Kharibam said that the heartbreaking loss to England is now behind them and the players are now looking forward to their exposure with the senior side. "We were all very upset after that match and some of us could not stop crying. We were so close to standing on the podium and it was quite hard to accept the defeat," said Bichu.

However, with the national camps resuming in SAI, the players have left behind the bitterness of that defeat. "We have moved on. The senior players spoke to us after that match and even chief coach Janneke (Schopman) gave us a talk on how it's important to now move on and focus on the positive learnings from that tournament," added Bichu.

"We also received so much love after we came back and many hockey fans messaged us personally and told us how we have to keep our chins up. It is very overwhelming to receive this kind of reaction despite losing the medal. This motivates us more to do well," she said.

Bichu Devi along with vice-captain Ishika Chaudhary, Akshata Abaso Dhekale, and Sangita Kumari among others have been credited for their performance with a place in the senior core group.

Motivation: The reaction despite losing the medal is overwhelming, says Bichu Devi. • TWITTER/@SPORTS_ODISHA

Chennai likely to host a WTA 250 event

Fingers crossed, we will be able to make an announcement soon: Amritraj

TENNIS

S. DIPAK RAGAV
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Tennis Association president and former Indian tennis legend Vijay Amritraj on Monday announced that Chennai is highly likely to host a WTA 250 event later in the year.

Last week, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu announced in the State assembly that efforts are being made to revive the Chennai Open tennis tournament.

Speaking after the TNTA's annual day event, Amritraj said, "I had a very good meeting with the honourable Chief Minister and he wants an event this year. Fingers crossed we will be able to make an announcement soon regarding this."

Vijay Amritraj. • FILE PHOTO

Plenty of interest

Amritraj added he has been in discussions with the WTA already about this for a while now and said there is a lot of interest to hold more events in India from WTA, APT and ITF.

> **Around September to October is the window we are looking at**

"We will start with a WTA tour 250 event this year and hopefully get an ATP event next year. Chennai has not had a women's event and it is important for us to encourage the girls in the State," said Amritraj.

On the possible window for an event, Amritraj said, "We are tight on weather dates so we either have to do it in the first three months of the year or before the rains commence.

"So around September to October is the window we are looking at."

Regarding a possible ATP event, the former Davis Cup captain said it will be independent of the ATP event in Pune and said it will be better if the event in Chennai could follow the Maharashtra Open.

Amritraj also explained that the event will be supported by a combination of public and private sponsorships.

"We want the blessing of the CM and then it is up to us to go out and execute the most spectacular event. We want to put the city and state front and centre globally.

"The courts have been done. We will be redoing the seats and sprucing up the stadium as well. The bottom line is Chennai will be on the tennis map."

Cairns talks of match-fixing trials

Former all-rounder recounts the struggle he endured

CRICKET

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WELLINGTON

New Zealand cricket great Chris Cairns feels he can talk candidly about the pain of match-fixing allegations brought against him now that he has survived multiple health scares.

The former all-rounder spoke publicly for the first time on Monday about the court battles to clear his name spanning 2012 to 2015.

Interviewed on a podcast hosted by media company *NZME*, Cairns said the high-profile trials had consumed his life and that he had harboured "anger and animosity" after having his credibility scrutinised and his career effectively shredded –even though he was never found guilty.

Cairns told the health battles carried a silver lining - helping cleanse his mind of the dark feelings that had hounded him since 2015.

Chris Cairns. • GETTY IMAGES

"I harboured a lot of anger and frustration, but I carried that silently. I dug my hole in Australia and got on with life but I was angry," he said.

"But now, after the last seven months, it's so far down my thinking. It's not a priority. It seems like another time, another place.

"Maybe during that time it (the match-fixing trials) built up the steel in me that allowed me to survive what I went through - because it was about survival at that time. I was on my own, cast as the villain, that was my role.

"Building that resilience up, who's to say that wasn't a contributing factor in helping me fight."

In March 2012, Cairns successfully sued former Indian Premier League commissioner Lalit Modi for libel, after Modi alleged on *Twitter* that the New Zealander had been involved in match-fixing in 2008.

Cairns won costs and damages.

Despite losing all cricket-related work in the wake of a trial he described as "horrendous", Cairns says he doesn't regret taking action against Modi.

IN BRIEF

Para shuttlers to train in Lima

HYDERABAD

Para shuttlers World No. 1 Pramod Bhagat and World No. 3 Sukant Kadam will train at the Videna National High-Performance Center in Lima, Peru. Both Pramod and Sukant will train with the Peru National Para Badminton team. This will help them learn new styles.

Wrestling trials

BENGALURU

Karnataka Wrestling Association will conduct trials at the K.H. Patil Indoor Stadium in Gadag on May 6 to select the State team for the under-15 National wrestling championship to be held in Ranchi from May 27 to 29. For details, contact Sharana Gouda Beleri (96320 52765).

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Ujwal sets up Magadi CA's win

Ujwal Krishna's five-wicket haul (5/10) was instrumental in Magadi CA's eight-wicket win over School of Cricket in an under-12 category match in the Tiger Cup cricket tournament here on Monday.

The scores: U-12: School of Cricket 113 in 23.4 overs (Ujwal Krishna 5/10) lost to Magadi CA 114/2 in 18.3 overs (Krish Rao 45).

United Aces pips Rush FC

United Aces FC defeated Rush FC 1-0 in the KSFA C-division league championship here on Monday.

The result: United Aces FC 1 (Thokchon 2) bt Rush FC 0; Bangalore Super Stickers FC 0 drew with Play Smart FC 0.

Hat-trick by Sabeel

Sabeel Ahamed scored a hat-trick as Md. Sporting FC blanked RS Sports FC 4-0 in the BDFA B-division league championship here on Monday.

The results:

Vehicles FC 1 (Carlton Joel 11) bt Royals FC 0; Md. Sporting FC 4 (Sabeel Ahamed 8, 53, 69, R. Rahul 25) bt RS Sports FC 0.

On top: The RIT team, which won the all-India inter-collegiate basketball championship for the Devadan Cup, recently. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT